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President: Mr. Kavan ..... (Czech Republic)

The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Item 41 of the provisional agenda (*continued*)

Final review and appraisal of the implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s: High-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly to consider how to support the New Partnership for Africa's Development

Reports of the Secretary-General (A/57/156, A/57/175)

Draft resolution (A/51/L.2/Rev.1)

The President: The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Carlos Ruckauf, Minister for Foreign Affairs, External Trade and Worship of Argentina.

Mr. Ruckauf (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): It is an honour for Argentina and for me to make a statement at this important debate to consider the issue of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). Argentina fully supports this new initiative aimed at eradicating poverty in Africa and helping its peoples in the path of the rule of law, growth and sustainable development. My country shares NEPAD's fundamental premise: the link between peace and development. In other words, economic and social development is not possible without an adequate framework for peace and stability. The reality in Africa and other parts of the world shows us daily that, as long as the basic needs of the individual remain unsatisfied and vast inequality persists, the threat of conflict will always be latent.

For centuries, the African continent has been part of the world economy as a supplier of unskilled labour and raw materials. Colonialism, post-war bipolar confrontation, the decolonization process, the end of the cold war and globalization brought with them specific trends, to which Africa tried to adapt, with a majority of the countries failing, regrettably, to achieve the expected development results.

However, we are not here to blame the past, but rather to help overcome structural weaknesses that have impeded development in Africa. NEPAD represents a new vision and responsible awareness by African leaders regarding regional and international politics and economics. Argentina values the political, economic and social objectives that the African leaders have pledged to achieve through NEPAD. Among those objectives, we wish to underscore conflict prevention, the protection of democracy and human rights, economic stability, the revitalization of the education and health sectors, with emphasis on the fight against HIV/AIDS, malaria and other communicable diseases, the promotion of the role of women, the development of infrastructure, agriculture and manufacturing, an equitable solution to the external debt issue and integration of the African continent into international trade.

The NEPAD objectives deserve the support of the international community — the international community at large, the donor countries, the Bretton

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Woods institutions and the World Trade Organization (WTO). The United Nations particularly must be the spokesperson for the least developed, smaller and weaker countries.

We live in a world of contradictions. Integration and globalization coexist with fragmentation and marginalization. The unprecedented economic prosperity achieved in recent years coexists with extreme poverty in parts of Africa and other areas of the world, including Latin America. The only option for one fifth of humankind is to survive on $1 per day. In spite of that, official development assistance has steadily diminished. We believe it must be increased. We also believe that the relationship between official development assistance and policy implementation is a key to achieving sustained economic growth in Africa. Fighting inflation and the fiscal deficit and encouraging savings and investment are measures that are directly related to the effectiveness of official development assistance.

In our view, support must not be limited to official development assistance; it must also be translated into liberalization of trade that would allow for real integration of the African countries into international trade. Tariff barriers are assuming new forms, such as establishing labour and environmental standards and anti-dumping measures, sending a message of little encouragement to African countries that are making considerable efforts to modernize their economies and conquer export markets. The issue of the external debt also deserves a sustainable solution that is not detrimental to the allocation of resources to priority areas of development, such as health and education.

In matters relating to peace and security, we are pleased to note the significant progress achieved in the peace processes in Angola, Sierra Leone, between Eritrea and Ethiopia and in the Great Lakes region, with the active involvement of African regional and subregional organizations and the clear, effective and decisive involvement of the Security Council through its resolutions. We think that the relationship between regional organizations and the Council must be reinforced and that we should explore the possibilities for cooperation set out in Chapter VIII of the Charter.

We are aware of the efforts being made by the majority of African Governments to settle their pending disputes peacefully, strengthen their democratic institutions, promote human rights and reform their economies. Today we want to renew our commitment to Africa. Argentina has always been present in Africa. From the beginning, we supported the decolonization process and the fight against apartheid.

Consistent with an approach that links peace and security, Argentina has contributed to peacekeeping, humanitarian assistance, good governance and technical cooperation for development.

In the 1960s, Argentina participated in the peacekeeping operation in Congo. Subsequently we have been present in Angola, Mozambique and in the United Nations Mission in Eritrea and Ethiopia. At present, Argentina is participating in the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara and in the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. With electoral observers, Argentina participated in the first free and fair elections held in South Africa, in the referendum for self-determination in Eritrea and in the 1997 legislative elections in Algeria.

Argentina provides humanitarian assistance either directly or through the "White Helmets" initiative and promotes development cooperation through a programme of cooperation funds. Likewise, with the Zone of Peace and Cooperation of the South Atlantic, which brings together three Latin American and 21 African countries, an action coordinated by my country since 1998, Argentina has presented several proposals to deepen cooperation among members of the Zone.

In recent years, Argentina has strengthened its political, cultural and commercial ties with Africa. We want this mutually beneficial trend towards dialogue and cooperation to continue and further deepen in the future.

I would not wish to conclude my intervention without expressing the gratitude of the Argentine Republic towards Africa. Virtually no changes could have been possible in this Organization in areas of paramount importance such as decolonization, disarmament, the law of the sea, human rights and development, just to name a few, without the substantial contributions and clear commitments made by Africa to the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter.

The President: Before giving the floor to the next speaker, I would like to remind all representatives about the agreed five-minute time limit on statements. I appeal to all speakers to really, genuinely respect it.

I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Abdurrahman Mohamed Shalghem, Secretary of the General People's Committee for Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya.

Mr. Shalghem (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) (*spoke in Arabic*): I am pleased to express my deep appreciation to you, Sir, for presiding over this very important meeting. I would also like to express our thanks to Secretary-General Kofi Annan for his keen interest in African causes and his continuous efforts for the establishment and consolidation of peace in the continent and for African development in all fields.

African leaders have reaffirmed their determined will and full commitment to guarantee complete success in the implementation of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), and have stated the need to take all genuine and effective measures to transform the Partnership into reality, especially because it is African-led and should respond to all of Africa's aspirations to comprehensive development.

This meeting, which is devoted to considering how to support NEPAD, is a clear indication of the international community's desire to respond to Africa's special needs. Those needs have been underlined in several international forums and, particularly, in the Millennium Declaration.

Africa fully realizes that the main responsibility for the implementation of NEPAD falls on the shoulders of the African peoples. However, international support is essential. That is why we urge the agencies of the United Nations system and the international community to help in achieving NEPAD's objectives through practical and concrete measures: by mobilizing financial resources, by increasing official development assistance and direct investment, by easing the debt burden and by embarking on new initiatives to improve the access of African exports to world markets, especially those of developed countries. There is also a need for assistance in the fields of human resources and capacity-building through investment in health, education, drinking water and the infrastructure projects needed to achieve economic development.

In order for NEPAD to be a true and truly new partnership, the partners should observe the following points. First, they must respect the will, history and culture of the Africans, with all that this entails: the exclusion of any political conditions or biased positions that would ignore the specificity and innate character of a society. Development should be recognized as a historical process that cannot be achieved through political decisions.

Secondly, donors should realize that the extent to which they contribute to the financing of NEPAD is the extent to which their own societies will benefit both materially and socially. Limiting or preventing immigration through legislative and administrative measures will not achieve the desired effect. The expansion of development projects in countries whose people are emigrating could keep people in their homeland and drastically and definitively remove incentives to emigrate.

Thirdly, priority should be given to infrastructure projects, especially in the fields of communications and road-building. This could help all sectors to achieve development, production and stability at lower cost.

Fourthly, special importance should be attached to water projects in order to make maximal and optimal use of all water sources in Africa for diverse purposes, especially agricultural, in order to solve food problems and eradicate poverty throughout the continent.

Fifthly, all restrictions on the transfer and dissemination of technology should be eliminated; this would further development in various economic and social fields.

Sixthly, consideration should be given to Africa's long suffering over past centuries, to the fact that its resources were plundered without compensation and to the role played by those resources in the development that certain countries have attained.

Finally, it is essential to deal with one of the most important phenomena in Africa, the brain drain, which affects its finest human resources, who emigrate to developed countries due to the pressure of several interconnected causes. The creation of a suitable environment for African minds and expertise plays a role in the countries that have prepared and educated such minds. This would greatly benefit the Partnership and save everyone huge costs in terms of the loss of talent.

The President: The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Inam ul Haque, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of Pakistan.

Mr. Haque (Pakistan): My delegation would like to begin by commending the African leadership for their vision of launching Africa on the path of sustainable growth and development through the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). We are happy that this Africa-led, Africa-owned and Africa-driven programme is an integrated and comprehensive framework for Africa's development.

During the past decade, many initiatives were evolved and launched. Yet the overall situation on the African continent has not improved over the last two decades. Some 80 million more people live in poverty in Africa today than did at the dawn of the decade of the 1990s.

Cognizant of these realities, most African Governments have undertaken important structural reforms, reflected in improved macroeconomic management, trade liberalization and the encouragement of greater and enhanced private sector participation. However, overall, the results have not reversed the economic decline in Africa. NEPAD offers hope. It sets out a broad vision for Africa's future, outlines a strategy for achieving that vision and spells out a programme of action focused on a number of key priority areas.

Many elements of New Partnership for Africa's Development, such as peace and security, poverty alleviation, socio-economic development, good governance and infra-structural development directly correspond to ongoing programmes of the United Nations in African countries. The United Nations can, and must, play a tangible supporting role in this important project.

The primary objective of NEPAD is to eventually eradicate poverty in Africa and place African countries on the path of sustainable growth and development, thus reversing the marginalization of Africa and integrating it into the globalization process. This is a gigantic and formidable challenge that Africa cannot overcome on its own. It needs meaningful international support and assistance, which will entail action at two levels.

First, the international community should help in dealing with the underlying political and security causes of instability in the African continent. At the same time, the economic and social problems afflicting parts of Africa must be tackled through a comprehensive assistance programme comprised of adequate resources. Such a programme should be complemented by: improved market access for African exports; accelerated and increased debt relief, including complete debt cancellation; enhanced official development assistance (ODA) without conditionalities; conscious efforts to increase the flow of foreign direct investment to African countries; transfer of technology to African countries on concessional and preferential terms; human resource development, particularly in health and education; and a special and focussed endeavour to halt and eradicate HIV/AIDS.

Pakistan, for its part, has consistently supported the political and economic aspirations of Africa. We are proud of our participation in several United Nations peacekeeping operations in that Continent. Our military and civilian personnel have been part of United Nations operations in Somalia, Namibia, Liberia, Western Sahara, and, lately, Sierra Leone. Pakistan will continue to lend its moral and material support to African countries.

Our technical assistance programme for Africa is an on-going process of training young professionals in diverse fields. Today, I would like to affirm that Pakistan will extend full support to NEPAD in all possible ways.

African people have suffered for a long time. Challenges faced by Africa are colossal. NEPAD represents a realistic framework to meet these challenges. Commitments are there, so are the plans. It is time to turn words into deeds. This is our moral obligation as well as a political imperative.

The President: The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Joseph Deiss, Federal Counsellor and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Switzerland.

Mr. Deiss (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): I am particularly pleased that it is on the subject of Africa that Switzerland is participating for the first time as a Member State in a substantive debate in this Assembly.

A long-standing partner of the African continent, Switzerland welcomes this initiative designed by Africans for Africa, through which the African

countries are expressing their determination to control the destiny of their continent. I wish, here, to congratulate our African colleagues on this new shared approach to the economic and social development of their continent and on the very ambitious and demanding strategy their countries have set up for themselves.

The massive support being given to this new partnership by the African States constitutes its greatest strength and the best evidence of its potential for success. The priority areas identified by NEPAD, in particular the development of human resources, will make it possible to act on the key factors of sustainable economic and social development on the continent.

I am also delighted that NEPAD places the principle of partnership at the heart of its efforts. As we already considered, the establishment of genuine partnerships among all parties concerned was an indispensable condition for the success of development cooperation.

We believe that the improvement of surrounding conditions will play the most critical role in allowing optimal action by all development players and in particular the private sector, to which NEPAD, correctly, attributes the fundamental role as the driving force of economic development.

It is therefore our hope that concrete steps can soon be taken in the areas of good management of public and private affairs, democracy and peace and security. In this regard, the rapid and systematic implementation of the Declaration on Democracy, Political, Economic and Corporate Governance seems to us to be an indispensable factor in increasing the confidence of all partners, including private investors, both African and those from outside the continent.

The implementation of an effective and credible review mechanism by peer countries, a major innovation promised by NEPAD, seems to us, therefore to be crucial.

Switzerland strongly encourages the clearly affirmed will of NEPAD to strengthen the role of African civil society in the design, planning and implementation of programmes.

The assistance that Switzerland has been giving to Africa for a long time is granted not only in a spirit of solidarity with the neediest populations, but also with the objective of intensifying, over time, our economic and commercial partnership. The programmes we support on the continent focus on the fight against poverty and support national strategies to combat poverty. Our programmes include action in the fields of health, education and training. We also focus on good governance in the public sector, decentralization and reforms in justice, as well as on the promotion of economy and investment, in particular, through measures for budgetary assistance.

Lastly, we attach growing importance to measures for peacekeeping and human rights. Moreover, we have always been strongly on the side of Africa in multilateral institutions. Switzerland has long been actively in favour of reducing the indebtedness of the least developed countries in the framework of the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Debt Initiative. Toward that end, we have entered into many financial assistance programmes and debt reduction programmes with our African partners.

We are determined to support NEPAD fully, within our means, and in particular with our longstanding partner countries. Coordination among partners is one of the fundamental concepts of NEPAD. I can assure you that Switzerland will participate fully. Nonetheless, a little more than a year before the launch of the initiative, we believe that the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) still needs to clarify its role with regard to the existing African institutions and to multilateral and bilateral partners, both internationally and at the subregional and country levels. In this regard, it seems essential to us that NEPAD avoid becoming an implementing structure, and that it be able to focus on its role as an advocate and a promoter.

Furthermore, we will continue to use our experience and our expertise in our traditional areas of intervention, in order to support NEPAD priorities. On the basis of our official development assistance (ODA) budget, we are prepared to envisage an increase in that support. Lastly, Switzerland will continue its resolute commitment, in the United Nations and international financial institutions, to programmes of cooperation and increased investment in Africa, in line with NEPAD priorities. We will also continue to work for the fair treatment of the poorest countries in international trade negotiations.

The President: The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Koffi Panou, the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Togo.

Mr. Panou (Togo) (*spoke in French*): On behalf of the Togolese delegation, I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for giving me this opportunity to speak in this debate concerning the New Partnership for Africa's Development, NEPAD. There is no need to mention how important and timely this debate is, given the great importance that Africa attaches to this new initiative and the role that the international community is called upon to play in its implementation.

According to the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, our continent had a growth rate of 4.3% in 2001, as compared to 3.5% in 2000. That is a good performance, one is tempted to say, but in fact we must acknowledge that the economic situation in Africa is still very precarious and disturbing. It requires strong action by the international community, and above all by the Africans themselves, especially if we want to achieve the priority development goals set forth in the Millennium Declaration.

NEPAD today is Africa's reply to the challenge of economic and social development in the continent. Africa is gradually getting organized and is assuming its own destiny with conviction, and welcomes the reception given NEPAD by development partners, primarily the United Nations, donor countries and international financial institutions. Africa welcomes the commitments already made at the summit meetings in Genoa, Monterrey, Kananaski and Johannesburg.

Our countries, by making the necessary efforts, strongly wish that the promises made at those meetings to help Africa attain NEPAD goals will be respected within the given deadlines. We are counting on the support of the United Nations and the entire international community. It is my hope that, following this debate, we will together undertake specific activities that answer the expectations of our peoples and their hopes for well-being and progress, so that one day we can say that NEPAD was not just another programme, but a project that delivered for Africa. It is high time for us to move from words to deeds.

The President: The Assembly will now hear an address by Her Excellency The Honourable Lilian Patel, the Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the Republic of Malawi.

Mrs. Patel (Malawi) (*spoke in English*): Allow me to join the other African delegations in thanking the United Nations for arranging this special high-level session as a platform to introduce the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). NEPAD is the flagship of the African Union, designed to create conditions for economic recovery and sustainable development on the continent, within the context of the United Nations Millennium Declaration and the Millennium development goals. It is first and foremost a partnership among the African countries themselves, and secondly a partnership between Africa and the international community, based on shared responsibility and mutual respect.

Through NEPAD, Africa wishes to demonstrate its determination to break with a long past, characterized by strategic missteps on the part of our leadership that resulted in immeasurable waste of the continent's precious resources and in a lamentable loss of opportunities for progress on the continent.

The NEPAD initiative would not have come at a better time than now, when Africa is plagued by deepening poverty, the debt burden, the HIV/AIDS pandemic, in addition to armed conflicts, famine, and other human crises. If only these problems could be overcome, Africa would be integrated into the world economy and have a role in the process of globalization. This would be not only for Africa's own benefit, but also for the benefit of all mankind.

As an African-owned and African-made development strategy, premised on collective self-reliance, NEPAD seeks to unlock the development potential of the continent's vast natural resources. However, this ought to be complemented by external capital inflows in the form of official development aid (ODA), trade and investment. In this respect, I would like to thank the Group of Eight (G-8) countries for leading the way in supporting NEPAD through the creation of the G-8 Africa Action Plan. This will serve as a rallying point for the initiative.

I would like to emphasize that increased ODA alone will not ensure the success of NEPAD. It is critical that the international community should also deliver on long-standing commitments on debt-relief, market access for African exports, and foreign direct investment.

For our part, we African Governments will ensure that good political and economic governance becomes

the norm through the determined promotion of pluralist democracy, accountability and transparency, and respect for the rule of law and human rights. Actually, Africa is already on an irreversible course of democratization. There may be problems here and there, but this should not be the basis for judging the whole continent. Naturally, different countries move at a different pace. What is necessary is the support of all, including our external partners, to overcome the problems. After all, NEPAD is intended to resolve such problems and to ensure the development of the African continent.

Let me take this opportunity to call upon the United Nations, and the world international community, to work in partnership with Africa to ensure the success of NEPAD.

The President: The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Celso Lafer, Minister for External Relations of Brazil.

Mr. Lafer (Brazil): It is a great honour for me to represent Brazil at this high-level meeting of the General Assembly dedicated to fostering African development.

The ties joining Brazil and Africa run deep. The contours of Brazilian culture and civilization owe much to their historical nexus with the African peoples. Brazil's support for the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) highlights this awareness of our inextricable connections to Africa.

We have taken a keen interest in the African continent and have been engaged in many recent developments there. We are convinced that a new era is being ushered in, one that offers renewed expectations for peace, democracy and prosperity. NEPAD is one of the reasons for optimism, for it embodies the recognition that Africa itself holds the key to its own development. It is an African-born initiative based on a profound understanding of the daily realities of the continent. Moreover, it contains mutually reinforcing aspects that allow for the creation of a virtuous circle of socio-political inclusion, development and peace. NEPAD also offers new opportunities with regard to development assistance. Resources to support NEPAD could be usefully channelled through multilateral institutions to foster triangular, as well as South-South, cooperation.

Since 1996, Brazil has adopted a debt alleviation policy with regard to African countries that contributes to the success of initiatives such as NEPAD. In recent years, we have written off more than $1 billion in debts in the hope of fostering, within our possibilities, development in Africa.

NEPAD is not an isolated proposal: it forms part of a wider effort for regional renewal enshrined in the establishment of the African Union. The first signs of these new times are already visible in the strengthening of democracy and the peaceful settlement of regional conflicts. Such is the case, for example, of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Sudan, Ethiopia and Eritrea, and Angola. Those developments underscore the affinity between the new African initiatives and the core principles of the United Nations. NEPAD and the African Union are significant steps on the road to making the African renaissance a reality.

Brazil shares many of the concerns of African countries. The zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic and the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries bring us together. Those forums offer further opportunities for coordination and cooperation on issues such as environmental protection, cultural exchange, trade liberalization and the fighting of the illicit traffic in small arms. The Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries, created in the 1990s, provides a powerful tool for political action and cooperation in realizing the common aspirations of our peoples.

Beyond the cultural and linguistic links, we are united in the struggle to overcome shared problems and in the struggle for a more equitable international order. The Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries is fundamentally committed to the primacy of peace, as enshrined in the Brasilia Declaration, adopted last August.

Brazil has sponsored other initiatives aimed at fostering cooperation and understanding between the two shores of the South Atlantic Ocean. In May and June of 2003, in Brasilia, we will host a wide-ranging Brazil-Africa seminar that will aim to put into perspective the array of ties that unite us on our common path to development.

Brazilian cooperation with Africa encompasses many areas from agriculture to infrastructure, from trade to public administration. The main thrust of these

projects is to develop human resources and to strengthen capacity-building. Let me highlight two essential areas: education and health.

Brazil is sharing with African countries its experiences in the field of education, such as the Bolsa Escola programme, a scholarship for poor families, aimed at increasing their income and keeping children in school. The initiative has proved to be a useful tool in promoting basic education, decreasing dropout rates and promoting income redistribution and poverty reduction. Brazil has already started a cooperation project with Mozambique and Sao Tome and Principe aimed at establishing a Bolsa Escola programme in those countries.

Another area where Brazil and African countries have joined efforts is that of the fight against HIV/AIDS. We do not need to dwell on the devastating impact of the epidemic. Based on an integrated approach of prevention, treatment and human rights policies, Brazil has halted the spread of the epidemic and has enabled people with HIV or AIDS to live normal and dignified lives.

Brazil has already initiated cooperation projects with African countries, in particular the Portuguese-speaking ones. Those projects are focused on capacity-building, human resources development and technology transfer. We also believe that the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria is an essential tool in providing assistance to African nations. Brazil has already actively participated in the Fund and has stated its readiness to contribute to it through technical assistance.

To conclude, in working to overcome common challenges, our partnership takes its cue from the vitality of our peoples, the creativity and determination of our leaders and the growing role of civil society. That partnership gives form to a mutually supportive relationship between a country and a continent which share the ideals of democracy, peace and development and which have found in NEPAD a new source of inspiration. NEPAD means African leadership and African ownership. That is an idea Brazil wishes to commend and support.

The President: The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Vilayat Mukhtar ogly Guliyev, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan.

Mr. Guliyev (Azerbaijan): I am pleased to address, on behalf of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly to consider how to support the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD).

I should also like to express our heartfelt congratulations to the countries of Africa on the occasion of the establishment of the African Union. We are certain that it will be a solid foundation for achieving greater unity and solidarity among the countries and the peoples of Africa, while accelerating the political and socio-economic integration of their continent.

We warmly welcome and support NEPAD, a truly African initiative that should lead African nations to the progress, prosperity and development of the entire African continent. We expect a more active and more visible role for NEPAD in advancing the interests of African nations in the international arena. It is within the power and the capability of African States to jointly promote and defend the cause of Africa and to speak up for those who have been abused or oppressed. The fact that some 30 per cent of all refugee populations forcefully displaced as a result of conflicts and tensions throughout the world are Africans dictates as a necessary goal the strengthening of relevant NEPAD functions. Always speaking with one voice and translating declared unity into practical work will allow African values to be upheld successfully and with dignity. As has been stressed by the majority of delegations, the unresolved conflicts on the African continent remain serious obstacles to establishing durable peace and security, stability and prosperity in Africa.

As a reflection of Azerbaijan's long-term contribution to Africa's development, I am proud to state that, since 1960, my country has been actively engaged in educating young men and women from various parts of the African continent. Approximately 10,000 young people from 25 African countries, among them eminent statesmen and leaders, have had the opportunity to receive their higher education in Azerbaijan.

I should like to reaffirm our commitment to supporting African development activities in the spirit of true partnership and mutually beneficial cooperation. We are certain that, with concerted efforts

by the international community, NEPAD will be a real success for Africa.

The President: The Assembly will now hear an address by The Honourable Mr. Tom Butime, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of Uganda.

Mr. Butime (Uganda): There is no doubt that the African countries will take responsibility for the implementation of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). In order to achieve the objective of eradicating poverty and other targets identified in the millennium development goals, however, NEPAD recognizes the need for key, mutually supportive, strategic partnerships. These include partnerships between African countries at the subregional and regional levels; partnerships between African Governments and the private sector, which were launched at the Conference on the Financing of NEPAD, held at Dakar in April; and partnerships between Africa and the international community, including the United Nations and donor countries, and within the framework of South-South cooperation.

Uganda is committed to the implementation of NEPAD, like many other African countries; it is also committed to constitutionalism, democracy and good governance. Uganda has established a national focal point for NEPAD, and it is envisaged that the national steering committee will involve the private sector and civil society. We feel that it is in Africa's own interest to build strong democratic institutions and to ensure the establishment of peace and security as prerequisites for development.

But how can the international community assist Africa in the implementation of NEPAD? That is a question on which I should like to concentrate. Since this morning, much has been said about the need for greater enhancement of the partnership between Africa and the international community, especially the donor countries. Uganda appreciates the effort led by Canada to support NEPAD, reflected in the Group of Eight (G-8) Africa Action Plan of June 2002. Initiatives such as the European Union's "everything but arms" initiative, the African Growth and Opportunity Act of the United States and The Canada Helps Build New Partnerships with Africa programme are a significant step forward. Equally useful are the proposals by the Secretary-General on future United Nations engagement with NEPAD.

In order to adequately support the implementation of NEPAD, Uganda calls upon the international community to take concrete and deliberate measures to implement the G-8 Africa Action Plan, including: allocating at least $6 billion per annum in new and untied bilateral resources for NEPAD programmes in Africa; meeting the objective of duty-free, quota-free market access for Africa's processed and semi-processed products as well as eliminating agricultural subsidies in the developed countries; increasing resources committed to the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Debt Initiative to ensure debt sustainability based on realistic export earnings of African countries; enhancing Africa's capacity to attract public- and private-sector investment from within and outside Africa for the development of human capacity, institutions, infrastructure — railways, roads and ports — and cheap and renewable energy sources, including hydroelectric power; facilitating the financing of private investment through the increased use of development finance institutions, export credits and risk guarantee agencies; supporting Africa's initiative to ensure efficient regional financial markets and domestic savings and financing mechanisms, including microcredit schemes; and supporting efforts aimed at higher agricultural productivity in Africa, including agricultural research institutions, sustainable land management, reliable central water systems, rural development and the integration of food security into poverty eradication strategies.

Finally, I hope that, when the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole meets on NEPAD in October, the General Assembly will agree on an action plan to ensure an integrated United Nations response to NEPAD through improved coordination and collaboration among its various bodies and agencies; coherence among the United Nations system, multilateral monetary and financial institutions and the World Trade Organization in support of NEPAD; and identification of selected indicators and targets, in consultation with the NEPAD Steering Committee and the African Union, to monitor the United Nations response to NEPAD.

The President: The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency The Honourable Keliopate Tavola, Minister for Foreign Affairs and External Trade of the Republic of the Fiji Islands.

Mr. Tavola (Fiji): The final review and appraisal of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (UN-NADAF) is

fostering the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). NEPAD is a home-grown African initiative that is taking off with new momentum in terms of ideological and strategic rethinking on development.

We are confident in the knowledge that long-term sustainable development solutions for Africa can be replicated in other developing countries. It is therefore my great pleasure, as a developing country in the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Group, to contribute to this debate on the final review of the United Nations Agenda. Fiji, as the Group's current President, warmly embraced the concept of NEPAD at the Group's last meeting, which my Government hosted last July. The Nadi Declaration, which was adopted at that meeting, was issued as document A/55/1015.

Three decades ago the developing countries of the African, Caribbean and Pacific regions formed the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group, of which the African continent forms an integral part. Our common vision was born out of the constituents' shared aspirations for socio-economic advancement, in partnership with the European Union. Market access was the usual substantive object of the trade agreements between the ACP and the European Union. The current preferential arrangement under the Cotonou Agreement continues this form of development assistance to the three regions in the Group until the end of 2007, when a new trade arrangement will need to be put in place.

The evolving global economic landscape has long challenged the ACP vision, today more than ever as our members find themselves immersed in and surrounded by the forces of globalization. NEPAD offers Africa a new opportunity to respond to these challenges. For NEPAD to deliver on the carefully targeted set of actions, its poiicy framework and aspirations have to be liberating and self-sustaining. Africa must control and feed its own development and growth mechanisms.

Indeed, this presupposes several levels of shifts and stances. Internal investment bases and saving mechanisms need to grow to be able to sustain domestic development programmes. Fundamental infrastructure is critical to long-term development and growth. Africa needs its dams, bridges, roads, schools, hospitals and communication facilities. Today Africa's future can leapfrog with information and communication technologies (ICT). While aid and official development assistance has its proper place, it has also entrenched the dependency mindset and so stifled growth. No country can be built on aid, debt or credit alone. While these resources are essential for development, we need new possibilities.

We have learned many lessons on development in Africa. The ravages of the HIV/AIDS pandemic threaten to roll back development gains in the continent. Notably, however, peace and security are gaining ground, while political stability increasingly is taking hold in the continent, with its new and emerging democracies. For its part, the international community has set up new mechanisms to help shape our options in this new partnership for the immediate future. The Monterrey Consensus and the Johannesburg action plan are pillars for, and are in place to help us deliver, the Millennium Development Goals. NEPAD can be built and strengthened on this foundation. It is incumbent on the United Nations to reorientate its modalities for partnership engagement with the African continent. In doing so, the United Nations must support the African ownership and leadership of NEPAD.

Once NEPAD is firmly rooted, Africa can favourably match its national and regional initiatives with external assistance. The avenues for such assistance would need to be transparent and solicited externally with the purposes of building democratic governance and sound political bases from the perspective of the African countries themselves. For too long, developing countries, including those on the African continent, have been shackled by the hands that feed them.

NEPAD cannot be built in a day. In future, we can look forward to a robust Africa, free of conflicts; an end to corruption and political instability; and a reduction in poverty in keeping with the development levels set by the Millennium Development Goals.

The President: The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Hassan Wirayuda, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia.

Mr. Wirayuda (Indonesia): Speaking as a person from Asia, let me say that this meeting reminds me of the Asia-Africa Conference held in Bandung in 1955 — a conference that, almost half a century ago, gave rise to the spirit of Bandung, advocating the principles of solidarity for the promotion of political

freedom and economic cooperation for development. It can still be relevant today in helping to inspire cooperation and solidarity among the peoples of our two continents.

Let me therefore welcome the establishment of the African Union and the launching of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), a holistic, integrated sustainable development initiative for the revival of economic and social development in Africa. NEPAD represents a call for a new relationship of partnership between Africa and the international community, including multilateral organizations, on the basis of mutual interest, benefit and equality, to promote sustainable development and eradicate wrenching poverty.

Taken together, NEPAD and the African Union should help to advance regional cooperation in Africa and should help Africa to speak for itself with a strong, coherent and single voice. These initiatives will provide greater opportunities for the continent to better meet the challenges of the twenty-first century and enhance its capacity to achieve the sustainable development goals set out in the implementation document of the Johannesburg Summit. Moreover, they offer the possibility of the promotion of regional peace and security on the continent, which are prerequisites for development.

The establishment of good governance and regional peace and security is part and parcel of the effective implementation of the New Partnership. We are pleased to note that the initiative is premised on African States' making commitments to good governance, democracy and human rights. These are critical prerequisites for moving development forward that are largely within the control of respective national Governments.

There are other issues, particularly those of finance and market access, that require cooperation between the international community and multilateral organizations. Regrettably, such cooperation, despite major initiatives and promises, has been gravely eroded over the past decade.

The gap between international commitments and results is particularly glaring in the case of Africa. Indeed, official development assistance decreased 43 per cent in Africa over the decade-long lifespan of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (UN-NADAF).

Moreover, crushing external debt levels have further undermined financing for development through the diversion of development resources. This adverse situation is most pronounced in the least developed countries. Despite pledges of debt relief, especially through the extended Debt Initiative for the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) — most of which are in Africa — little or nothing significant has been achieved. In fact, only a few countries had reached "completion point" as of April 2002.

The international trading system, which holds out great hope for development, has largely failed the developing countries, particularly in Africa. Trade opportunities under the UN-NADAF mechanism expanded far more slowly than expected. One of the persistent underlying constraints responsible for the weak performance of African economies is their heavy reliance on primary commodities. This is largely due to the deterioration in the terms of trade for commodities vis-à-vis industrial goods and to the punitive tariff barriers confronting processed and value-added products from Africa.

Those were lessons well learned from the implementation of the New Agenda. Thus, as is fully recognized by African Governments, there is an acute need for diversification, as commodities alone hold few prospects for the future. Greater efforts towards diversifying exports under the framework of the New Partnership are therefore a critical way forward. But diversification alone will not suffice. What is also critical is a conducive external environment, particularly one that provides ample access to markets. This has certainly not been promoted by agricultural subsidies in rich nations, which have not only shut out producers from developing countries but have also depressed prices.

Proposals on the modalities of future United Nations engagement with the New Partnership for Africa's Development are outlined in the Secretary-General's report. We welcome these relationships, which will take place at the country, regional and global levels, and we hope that they will be further strengthened. Pledges have been made at high-level meetings to reverse the declining trend in official development assistance, to open up the markets of developed countries to developing countries' export products and to reorient the world's financial and trade systems towards promoting sustainable development and addressing the development needs of developing

countries. But all these pledges have been made before. Now we must have action.

To support the implementation of NEPAD we must strengthen international cooperation and multilateralism. As a unique reservoir of multilateralism, the United Nations is well positioned as a coordinator of the follow-up to major United Nations conferences and as a supporter of NEPAD and the development of Africa. It is our hope that we can translate the partnership and cooperation that drive NEPAD and the African Union into broader solidarity by promoting cooperation with other subregional groups in Asia. Such cooperation and solidarity between our two continents would greatly reflect the message of the Asia-Africa conference held at Bandung in 1955: the Bandung spirit. Indonesia stands ready to help strengthen such multilateralism and hopes that NEPAD will be successfully implemented.

The President: The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Igor S. Ivanov, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation.

Mr. Ivanov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): Our discussion of today's problems in Africa is important and timely, all the more so as the problems and threats faced by Africa in the context of globalization are increasingly the problems and threats we all face. That is why our strategic objective is a common one, namely, to break the vicious circle of underdevelopment, conflict and disruption in development programmes. It is for that reason that we all attach such importance to a comprehensive approach to the key problems of Africa: crisis management and prevention, poverty eradication, economic recovery and the consolidation of democracy.

The establishment of the African Union was a major step in pooling the efforts of African nations. The African Union is, quite rightly, focused on social and economic development. Peoples and States must indeed be free to choose their own future and to assume their responsibilities with regard to peace and security issues, economic management, the sustainable use of natural resources, efforts against corruption and the effective allocation of resources to promote development. All of that was in fact taken into account in drafting the programme objectives of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD).

Mr. Seixas Da Costa (Portugal), Vice-President, took the Chair.

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In cooperation with all other concerned members of the international community, Russia will do all it can to realize the rightful aspirations of African nations.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Marcel Ranjeva, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Madagascar.

Mr. Ranjeva (Madagascar) (*spoke in French*): Like those who have spoken before us, the Malagasy delegation, which I am honoured to lead, cannot fail to take this opportunity to express its deep gratitude for the convening of this high-level meeting devoted to the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD).

At a time when the international community is seeking ways and means to cooperate in the multilateral and regional spheres to attain sustainable development, this meeting is a testament to the will of Africa's leaders to launch the continent's economy. We must not forget, however, that NEPAD is above all a programme designed by African heads of State, including President Wade of Senegal, a great friend of Madagascar of very wise and enlightened counsel who has spared no effort to provide assistance to resolve the Malagasy post-electoral crisis, for which we are very grateful.

This programme is designed to lay the foundations for a partnership between Africa and the developed world. Our continent is thus taking its destiny in its own hands. We welcome the fact that we are taking responsibility for and accepting ownership of our future, especially since the partnership emphasizes democracy, transparency, good governance, the rule of law and human rights.

I would like to highlight a few issues that are of particular importance to us. The first relates to the need to finance the programme so as to ensure that it does not remain merely a good intention. As we have seen, official development assistance has been steadily decreasing, despite the various pronouncements on this matter, the most recent of which include the Millennium Declaration and the Monterrey Consensus.

Current thinking supports development financing through foreign direct investment, above all from the private sector. But in poor countries like ours, it is not foreign investment that creates growth, but growth that attracts private foreign investment. The liberalization policy underlying current economic doctrine is, in the long term, beneficial, and we must therefore prepare for it from cultural and technical standpoints. We must take account of our infrastructures and make it possible for the State to take action, for example by helping farmers through the provision of subsidies and by other means. Competition must be promoted, but it must be competition between protagonists of equal strength. As Lacordaire said, "Between the strong and the weak, freedom oppresses and the law protects."

Madagascar, a country in which farmers make up 80 per cent of the population, relies on its agriculture as the driving force of sustainable and rapid development. All developed countries have, at some point in their history, subsidized their own agricultural sector. We must not therefore impose on the poor countries draconian conditions to which the big Powers are not themselves subjected. The developed countries and economic unions allocate excessive subsidies to livestock and agriculture, as well as to certain other industries. Such practices contradict the rules of liberalism that apply in developed countries — yet poor countries are being refused social subsidies for foodstuffs. We must not kill the patient in the process of curing the disease.

We must find other sources of financing for these vital public investments. This is not a new concept; studies have been carried out on this matter by prominent experts. Solutions are discussed at every major international gathering, and I should like to take this opportunity to recall a few of them. They include the cancellation or, at least, significant reduction of the debt, whose unfair rates and terms are denounced on a regular basis by the developing countries. I would also like to mention the idea of taxing financial transactions or wealth produced through globalization. We must not from the outset, in the name of economic liberalism, discard the idea of international taxation; the world cannot be truly human without solidarity.

The second point that I would like to emphasize is that African peoples must set the terms themselves and benefit from the results, and their leaders must be particularly committed to the well-being of their peoples.

We believe that the Peer Review Mechanism — a revolutionary idea — is a tool with the potential to strengthen fundamental rights in Africa. However, it must not conflict with existing human rights mechanisms and, above all, must serve the general interests of our peoples.

In conclusion, I appeal to the international community to encourage and support NEPAD with a view to enabling Africa to emerge from its isolation and underdevelopment.

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Leonardo Santos Simão, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Mozambique.

Mr. Simão (Mozambique): The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) is a vision and a holistic framework programme of the African Union, developed by African leaders to promote Africa's sustainable development. We Africans have created our own home-grown solutions to development problems and should strive for domestic partnerships between the public and private sectors and civil society. In order to avoid the marginalization of Africa and to improve its image and credibility, the continent should enhance its capacity to implement development programmes through self-financing mechanisms and the use of African technical expertise, with the international community playing a complementary role in those African efforts.

We all seem to agree that the time has come to move away from the information phase of NEPAD and to ensure its implementation. This is, indeed, a challenging stage, and we need to address some important perceptions if we are to succeed. First, there is a perception that developed partners are more interested in the political issues of NEPAD -- the Peer Review Mechanism — while Africans are more interested in the economic and social issues. It is important to note that both the political and the economic objectives of NEPAD were set out by African themselves and constitute challenges to be overcome if the continent is to develop.

Furthermore, Africa is aware that different countries will experience different degrees of difficulty in reaching agreed goals. What those countries will require is encouragement to identify and overcome those difficulties, instead of criticism and pressure on the grounds that they are bad performers.

Secondly, we Africans should avoid the perception that we are the eternal victims of the North.

Within the framework of NEPAD, there is room for an effective partnership with the international community, in particular the United Nations system. That partnership will require improvements in the efficiency of the United Nations system with regard to development programmes devoted to the African continent. United Nations agencies and programmes should therefore synchronize and harmonize their programmes to bring them into line with the objectives of NEPAD.

The United Nations should support institutional, financial and human capacity-building in Africa in order to establish and strengthen peace, stability and good political, economic and corporate governance. The Security Council should continue to pay special attention to the conflicts in Africa and should strive to bring about effective solutions in close cooperation with Africans. The success of NEPAD and its sustainability will depend, ultimately, on the strength and performance of African institutions, at both the national and the regional level.

The United Nations has an additional role to play in helping Africa to address issues of debt relief, market access and the empowerment of the African private sector. This high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly thus provides us with the opportunity to renew our commitment to making Africa a continent of peace and hope for a better future.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now hear and address by His Excellency Mr. Kamal Kharrazi, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Mr. Kharrazi (Islamic Republic of Iran): It is indeed a great honour for me to have the opportunity to participate in the high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly to consider how to support the New Partnership for Africa's Development. What we have already heard this morning from the President of the General Assembly and from the heads of State and delegations indicates that there has been a good assessment and analysis of the African predicament. The reality of the situation faced by so many millions of people and in the greater part of the continent is grim enough and calls for a real, serious and comprehensive approach, policy and action on a scale and magnitude commensurate with the situation itself.

Let me reiterate my country's full solidarity with African countries, all of which belong to the family of developing nations. Last year, the Islamic Republic of Iran, as the Chairman of the Group of 77, was, much to its satisfaction, closely involved in two important

processes related to Africa. One was the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, the majority of which are located in the African continent. The Ministerial Declaration of the high-level segment of the Economic and Social Council, whose chosen theme was "Role of the United Nations system in supporting the efforts of African countries to achieve sustainable development", was the other. Both had constructive and fruitful outcomes, on which several good ideas were built, and produced tangible results.

Currently, my country has active bilateral and multilateral cooperation with and a diplomatic presence in most African countries. With hindsight, determination and mutual cooperation, we have been able to contribute to a large number of projects and reconstruction plans in many African countries. Building infrastructure, the construction of hospitals and health clinics, and academic and scientific cooperation represent some general topics under which we have contributed to the development of the poorer areas of the continent. Given the vulnerability of the continent to so many natural disasters, my country has come up with financial and humanitarian assistance, including grants, on almost every occasion. Furthermore, in order to promote and facilitate economic and commercial relations, my Government has allocated a $200-million line of credit for Africa.

Finally, the African renaissance, the rebirth we have all been talking about in recent months and days, can be initiated and undertaken in all earnestness only by Africans themselves and by African countries, individually and collectively. The New Partnership for Africa's Development embodies all these elements and is a step in the right direction. As far as the United Nations system is concerned, it should undertake to integrate all its various plans, programmes and initiatives into a comprehensive policy framework comprising all political, economic and social components and with clear, well-defined roles and mandates for the relevant executing agencies and departments. Yes, there is a way forward for Africa. Let us all seize the moment and start on that road forward.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Souef Mohamed El-Amine, Minister of State and Minister for Foreign Affairs, Cooperation, la Francophonie, the Environment and in charge of Comorians living abroad of the Comoros.

Mr. El-Amine (Comoros) (*spoke in French*): My delegation is pleased to address the issue of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). Designed by Africans for Africans, this new framework for development, with all of its objectives for remedying the continent's major problems, has today crystallized our leaders' awareness of the vital need to take in hand the destiny of our countries. Stifled by the debt burden, shaken by violence of all sorts, weakened from all standpoints by war, decimated by such diseases as HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis, and marginalized by a world trade system that is little inclined to recognize their efforts and constraints, these countries hope to find their salvation in this new initiative.

It must be recognized, however, that this initiative has no guarantee of viability except insofar as it is supported by our partners. That is why, in expressing our gratitude for this opportunity to introduce our programme, it is our hope that the international community will become effectively involved in this process through consistent support. We further hope that a real partnership, without exclusions, can be established between us and our partners and that the United Nations, for its part, will see in this initiative a framework for the extension of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s through support for NEPAD. NEPAD defines sectoral priorities within a regional framework that are also part of a global context, in keeping with global concerns.

In the framework of the implementation of its sustainable development policy, NEPAD will have to take into account the specific case of small island States. United to Africa but cut off from it geographically, our small archipelagic States are sometimes the victims of their own isolation. Natural disasters constantly strike them, destroying their development efforts and their natural wealth, which for the most part involves their flora and fauna. Furthermore, the exploitation of our resources, their plundering by countries that have more powerful and more sophisticated means, and the pollution of our marine spaces along our coasts by large oil companies are phenomena that are growing and threatening the survival of human beings and of the species that constitute the sole resources of our countries. That is why we hope that these issues will attract the interest of all our partners in helping our island countries to

establish mechanisms to monitor and protect our land and marine environments for the well-being of our peoples.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Joseph Philippe Antonio, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Haiti.

Mr. Antonio (Haiti) (*spoke in French*): I have the honour to address the Assembly on behalf of the 14 members of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM): Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago.

We are happy to see you, Sir, presiding over this high-level meeting of the General Assembly to consider support to the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). We also welcome the dynamic leadership demonstrated by African States as they prepare this new partnership.

Decade after decade, the African people have experienced the worst that civilization has offered. Official statistics show that over 1.3 billion inhabitants live below the poverty threshold on $1 per day, of which 350 million live in Africa. Africa's share in the global poverty figure increased from 25 per cent to 30 per cent between 1999 and 2002.

That situation prevails at a time when most African countries are moving towards economic liberalism, with a view to meeting the demands of the international financial institutions. However, those same statistics also show that since 1970 savings and investment have been decreasing in Africa. Africa's debt is estimated at $300 billion. It is a major obstacle to the socio-economic development of the continent. That situation has a serious impact on trade, direct investment programmes and the process of economic growth. Nevertheless, investment is the prerequisite for the creation of wealth capable of promoting economic growth aimed at sustainable development.

We must keep our eyes fixed on the goals set at Doha, Monterrey and Johannesburg. We must all work together to liberate men, women and children from the extreme poverty that dehumanizes them. We must act now decisively and effectively to reduce the gap between rich and poor countries and to ensure that globalization benefits all humanity.

In that context, the CARICOM States welcome NEPAD with satisfaction and reaffirm their solidarity and full cooperation with the African Governments and peoples. NEPAD is an ambitious initiative that redefines a partnership of responsibility and commitment and attests to Africa's resolve to take responsibility for its own future. The challenge is indeed enormous. Overcoming it will require achieving and sustaining an annual growth rate of 7 per cent over the next 15 years. According to some estimates, more than $200 billion will be needed during that period just to reduce the effects of poverty.

This African initiative for Africa seeks to eliminate poverty and underdevelopment. It requires the full support of the international community, particularly donors. It is an opportunity to break with tradition and to invite all donors to coordinate support for Africa, taking into account the priorities set by the Governments and people of Africa, not on the basis of conditions imposed from the outside.

Like Africa, the Caribbean States believe that this is an historic opportunity to end the suffering of the peoples of Africa. The resources are available to do so. The CARICOM States are of the view that a firm commitment by the international community to translate words to action and by the continued responsible leadership in Africa to work steadily towards sustainable development in Africa will ensure its success.

We are confident that the peoples of Africa, with their energy and creativity, are yearning for an improvement in their quality of life, as they await the genuine support of their partners. We in CARICOM believe that this momentum must be capitalized on to facilitate a fruitful partnership in order to reduce the gap in Africa's development. Africa's precious resources have been exploited by the major industrialized economies for centuries. It is time that Africa's resources be utilized for the development of Africa.

In conclusion, in addition to supporting NEPAD, the international community has the moral obligation to support Africa in this effort. So many decades of unequal relations call for a new paradigm.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now hear an address by Her Excellency Ms. Uschi Eid, Vice-Minister and Parliamentary Secretary of State of

the Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development of Germany.

Ms. Eid (Germany): The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) is a guiding vision for Africa's development in the twenty-first century. Wise and courageous African reformers have designed it for their continent. NEPAD recognizes that economic growth, sustainable development and an effective fight against poverty are based on the solid cornerstones of good governance, democracy, the rule of law, respect for human rights and a social market economy. That interdependence is not a new perception. However, in NEPAD's case it does not remain a misty theory; rather, it becomes the guiding principle of practical policy. Thus, NEPAD is not only a programme; it is also a forum for reformed leadership in Africa.

NEPAD now has to grapple with implementation efforts. Visions of reform must be translated into everyday work. I wish my African colleagues the necessary patience, strength and perseverance. The German Government provides broad support to the African countries in this venture bilaterally, as well as within the framework of the United Nations. Africa and NEPAD can count on the solidarity of the international community. Germany considers NEPAD to be a basis for a new and enhanced partnership with Africa. With its new approaches, NEPAD opens up great opportunities for self-determined development.

This new way of thinking is already breaking ground. The best evidence of that is the African record of success in overcoming armed conflict in recent months. Let me just mention Madagascar, Angola and the peace agreement between Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. That is the successful effort of African diplomacy, and we congratulate the African statesmen and politicians involved on that achievement. Furthermore, NEPAD has withstood the first test with regard to building and strengthening of African conflict-management institutions. The resolution adopted at the constitutive summit of the African Union in Durban to set up a pan-African peace and security council is a very tangible development of the peace and security initiative embedded in NEPAD.

It is important that NEPAD willingness to reform and its dynamism continue to hold sway. It is crucially important to NEPAD success that it maintain its clear profile and remain a programmatic platform and operative framework for visionary leadership in Africa. In Durban, the African Union agreed to the peer review mechanism developed within the framework of NEPAD. We welcome it, as good governance, democracy, human rights and corporate governance are becoming an issue of a form of dialogue among African States. The peer review process opens up substantial opportunities. If it is executed honestly, thoroughly and transparently, it will strengthen Africa's credibility in advocating sustainable reforms.

The Peer Review Mechanism thereby contributes to improving the general political and economic environment and to increasing the continent's attractiveness as an investment destination of great growth potential in qualitative terms. Hence it is important for as many African countries as possible to state their willingness to participate in the peer review and, if the process is put into effect, to do so as speedily as possible.

NEPAD, as a spearhead for reforms in Africa, is exposed to difficult challenges. These include the situation in Zimbabwe. Let me say that we are greatly concerned about what is happening there. The events in Zimbabwe jeopardize NEPAD's credibility and sustainability. It would indeed be desirable if Zimbabwe's neighbours were to react to the situation more distinctly and decisively. The irresponsible policy pursued by the Government in Harare puts prospects for development, and the stability of the whole region of southern Africa, at risk.

The international community explicitly endorses the beginning of a new African age of reform rung in by NEPAD. One thing is clear: the tremendous challenges Africa is facing can be mastered only jointly, in solidarity between the North and the South. As a member of the Group of Eight (G-8), Germany has accepted NEPAD's invitation to establish a new partnership based on a foundation of mutual responsibility and respect. With their Africa Action Plan, the G-8 heads of State and Government, meeting at Kananaskis, gave a political response to NEPAD as a political vision for the future of the African continent because we want a strong Africa.

The Acting President: Before giving the floor to the next speaker, May I remind representatives that the limit for statements in this debate is five minutes.

The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Hans Dahlgren, State Secretary for Foreign Affairs of Sweden.

Mr. Dahlgren (Sweden): The presidency of the European Union has already outlined the positive view of the European Union with regard to the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). I concur with everything in that speech, and I will therefore limit myself to a few remarks.

We who speak today are all aware of the political and economic problems facing Africa. They are challenging our best common values. They are a threat to the security and welfare of us all. NEPAD has therefore been warmly welcomed as an expression of Africa's determination to assume strong leadership for poverty reduction and for development. African leaders have set an agenda for renewal of the continent based on African ownership and commitment. NEPAD puts the right focus on peace and stability, on democracy and human rights, and on good political and economic governance as prerequisites for development.

In realizing the objectives of NEPAD, one can build on important achievements made in recent years in the framework of the United Nations. The Millennium Declaration outlines what we have to do together. The Monterrey Consensus signals measures to be taken in the areas of mobilizing domestic resources, trade, private investment, debt relief and official development assistance. Add to that the outcome of the Johannesburg Summit. Much of this can also be found in NEPAD.

Now, how does one translate all these commitments into concrete action? There are several answers. One is by focusing, at the national level, on poverty reduction strategies as instruments to implement NEPAD principles and to realize national ownership of development. Another is by focusing on strengthening competence and capacity, on involving civil society and the private sector, as well as on partnership and coordination between African countries and their external partners, thereby making their joint efforts more effective. In addition, the focus should also be on the United Nations system's obvious role in coordinating and supporting the implementation of NEPAD.

NEPAD emphasizes regional cooperation, and Sweden stands ready to support that. We have recently adopt0ed a strategy for support to regional development cooperation in sub-Saharan Africa on the continental level through the African Union, the Economic Commission for Africa and the African Development Bank, as well as through subregional organizations. The focus is on conflict management, economic cooperation and integration, infrastructure and national resources.

Without peace and security, long-term development and poverty eradication are utopian ideas. With NEPAD, African leaders have shown their firm commitment to assume responsibility for peace and security on their continent, ranging from prevention to conflict resolution. Sweden strongly supports that ambition. Sweden also welcomes the decision of the African Union to establish a Peace and Security Council and to strengthen its work on conflict management.

Promoting peace and security in Africa will also continue to be a priority for the United Nations. In addition, the G-8 has made welcome commitments to develop, together with its African partners, a joint plan to strengthen African capabilities to undertake peace support operations.

Much of this may sound abstract, but there are also very concrete examples of what can be done. Look at Sierra Leone, a clear case of effective international conflict management where the United Nations, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and other partners have played a crucial role in turning a long-standing and bloody civil war into a credible peace process, culminating in peaceful elections in May this year. It is of crucial importance for me and my Government that the huge investment that has been made in human and financial resources in Sierra Leone, and the lessons learned from that success story, are not now be lost because of continued conflict in the Mano River Union area. Sweden and the European Union stand firmly behind ECOWAS in its efforts to broker a peaceful solution to the ongoing conflict in Liberia.

The Acing President: The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Mohamed Affey, Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Kenya.

Mr. Affey (Kenya): Let me commend Mr. Jan Kavan on the able manner in which he has been steering the affairs of this session. It is a great honour for me, on behalf of His Excellency Daniel arap Moi

President of the Republic of Kenya, to address this high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly on the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). The decision by the General Assembly to hold this meeting is timely. It is also a recognition of the importance of NEPAD to the African peoples and their development partners.

Several decades after independence, African countries are still grappling with problems such as poverty, disease and illiteracy. Over the past decade, Africa has continued to sink further into the abyss of oblivion, owing to the marginalization brought about by globalization, the effects of the HIV/AIDS pandemic, the heavy debt burden and rising levels of poverty, hunger and malnutrition. For Africa to be able to surmount these problems, concrete measures are required in resolving the debt crisis, providing market access for African products, funding health services, developing infrastructure, protecting the environment, developing human resources and, especially, ensuring the education of our children. We should not lose sight of the fact that our future will depend on today's investment in our children. The health, education and general well-being of our children is therefore the foundation for Africa's development. We should strive to uphold children's rights in line with the millennium development goals and the goals set out in "A World Fit for Children", adopted by the General Assembly at its twenty-seventh special session.

Africa has seen several initiatives aimed at resolving the myriad problems affecting the continent. However, none of them has been able to achieve the desired results, largely due to the lack of goodwill from our partners, the inadequacy of resources for implementation and the limited ownership and participation of African Governments and peoples. It is out of this frustration that African leaders have agreed on the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) as the continent's development blueprint, which places emphasis on the twin principles of ownership and partnership. It is worth noting that the priorities outlined in the NEPAD initiative are in line with the millennium development goals adopted by world leaders in September 2000 on the occasion of the Millennium Summit. The recent launching of the African Union by African leaders is testimony to the commitment of African leaders to strengthening the institutional mechanism for the implementation of NEPAD.

Kenya continues to play a major role in the NEPAD process. The President of the Republic of Kenya last June hosted the Eastern African summit on NEPAD, which came up with a way forward for NEPAD in the subregion. To ensure the integration of NEPAD into domestic policy and the participation of all stakeholders, a private-sector task force has been established, which is working with the Government in mainstreaming NEPAD priorities.

At the regional level, Kenya is committed to the principles of regional integration, one of the building blocks of the African Union. Kenya has actively supported and is a member of several regional economic integration blocs. In addition, Kenya has continued its efforts in peace-building in the region, as evidenced by its role in the Sudan and Somalia peace processes.

We in Africa were encouraged by the warm reception extended to NEPAD by the high-level segment of the Economic and Social Council of July 2001, the International Conference on Financing for Development of March 2002 in Monterrey, the G8 summit and the recently concluded World Summit on Sustainable Development. We further commend the G8 for coming up with the plan of action for NEPAD adopted at Kananaskis, Canada, in July 2002. We are convinced that if NEPAD is to succeed, the support of the United Nations and the international community is paramount. In this regard, this meeting should come up with a way forward for the support of NEPAD by the United Nations.

In conclusion, as we embark on the final review and appraisal of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s, we expect NEPAD to take up its rightful position as the United Nations and the international community's policy document for Africa's development.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Habib Ben Yahia, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Tunisia.

Mr. Yahia (Tunisia) (*spoke in French*): Today, our Assembly is discussing a matter which is of paramount importance to the future of Africa.

My country has worked tirelessly to promote peace, security and development on our continent. We highly welcome the General Assembly's decision to devote a day's debate to the New Partnership for

Africa's Development (NEPAD) in support of our continent's development efforts. Africa has a great wealth of natural resources and human potential and is now determined to take charge of its own future and to rely on itself in facing the challenges before it. In that spirit, it drew on its fundamental beliefs to formulate NEPAD, which is strategic and comprehensive and seeks development based on African resources to avoid underdevelopment in an environment of peace, security and stability, which are prerequisites of any development effort.

In moving into this innovative phase, Africa is prepared to use its own resources. Attaining this ambitious programme, however, will be possible only with the help of the international community in the successful implementation of NEPAD as an expression of the African peoples' aspirations to a better future.

The Millennium Summit stressed the particular needs of Africa and affirmed the priority of African development. The heads of State therefore decided to take special steps in respect of Africa, including debt cancellation, improved access to markets, increasing official development assistance and promoting direct foreign investment and the transfer of technology. It was also decided to help the continent stem the spread of disease, in particular HIV/AIDS.

Africa appreciates the support voiced by many wealthy countries at the Monterrey International Conference on Financing for Development. Africa needs those promises to be kept as soon as possible, given the difficulties facing it. We were extremely pleased in that connection to note the positive response of the G8 to NEPAD. We also welcome the encouraging outcome of the 2000 Europe-Africa summit, the progress achieved at the France-Africa summit and the fruitful cooperation between Japan and African countries under the First, Second and Third Tokyo International Conferences on African Development. We also welcome the promising dialogue between China and Africa.

Our world today is increasingly interdependent. All of our interests are interlinked, as are our concerns. If allowed to continue, the imbalance between rich and poor could jeopardize security in the prosperous countries. It is essential to ensure harmonious development for the welfare of the entire human race. Solidarity is therefore a prerequisite for building the better world to which we all aspire.

Tunisian President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali has long been aware of these truths. In the early 1990s, he spoke of the need to reach an agreement on peace, partnership and development between the developed and the developing countries. He has always stressed the positive impact of active solidarity between rich and poor and the value of mutual assistance among States through his initiative to establish a world solidarity fund to be used to combat poverty and exclusion. In that context, my country welcomes the regional and international broad support for this initiative and counts on the General Assembly's active assistance in ensuring that this humanitarian programme be realized as soon as possible.

We are meeting here at a time when hope is being reborn in Africa. In July at Durban, our continent entered a new phase of its history with the establishment of the African Union, thus attaining the aspiration of African peoples to solidarity and unity. Conflicts in many parts of our continent are now being resolved and Africa is recognizing the value of peace, democratization and good governance. The time has come to support Africa's efforts with the assistance necessary to pursue the promising impetus. We all hope for good results from this endeavour. I reaffirm Africa's and Tunisia's desire to build a world of peace, stability and harmony.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now hear an address by Her Excellency Baroness Valerie Amos, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs of the United Kingdom.

Baroness Amos (United Kingdom): This is an important occasion and it is entirely right that we should come together to consider how to support the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). The United Nations is the right place for us to do so.

Africa's problems are the world's problems. Conflict and State failure — all too prevalent in Africa — create poverty, refugees and opportunities for transnational crime. They can undermine the credibility of the United Nations and they may breed terrorism.

NEPAD represents a unique opportunity to address the challenges facing Africa. It defines a new approach to African development and holds out the promise of an end to conflicts which have devastated the continent and continue to hold back its development; of the entrenchment of sound economic

and political governance which will root out corruption and secure justice; of the release of Africa's productive potential through access to trade; and of winning investment to build stronger economies. All these are vital and interconnected issues, but in the time available, I would like to focus on the need to resolve and manage conflict in Africa.

The Group of Eight (G-8) Africa Action Plan commits the world's leading industrialized nations to supporting Africa's efforts to tackle conflict and to address some of the causes and drivers of conflict in Africa that lie in the international sphere: for example, arms flows, the exploitation of economic resources by external actors and weak international conflict-management mechanisms.

Let me here pay tribute to the Secretary-General. He has demonstrated that with leadership, courage and commitment, results can be achieved. He has shown practical commitment to increasing the impact of United Nations operations on the ground, and he has our fullest support.

The United Kingdom is committed to supporting both international and African efforts to reduce conflict in Africa. This is an area where a common commitment and real political will can have a huge impact. We know that peace and security are the essential prerequisites for putting the continent on the road to sustainable development. Success in resolving Africa's long-running conflicts would transform the lives of millions of people, and we are taking concrete action to support efforts to tackle specific conflicts on the continent.

Sierra Leone demonstrates what can be achieved when Africa and the international community work in partnership. The country is at peace, refugees and the internally displaced are returning home and people are rebuilding their shattered society. We know that a long-term commitment is required. Peace will be secure only once the problems of weak governance, control over natural resources — for example, diamonds — and regional instability have been addressed.

I am also pleased that, with the establishment of a contact group, the international community and the United Nations should be able to give more effective and urgent assistance to regional efforts to resolve the conflict in Liberia.

In Sudan the peace process has undoubtedly suffered a setback with the escalation of fighting in the south and the suspension of talks. But we will continue to back the peace process as part of the international observer team supporting the negotiations of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development. We are pressing all sides to return to the negotiating table, as that is the only way to achieve peace.

In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, we see hopeful signs of a major breakthrough due to African efforts. The United Kingdom has dispatched a joint mission with the United States to see how we can help the parties drive this forward. Looking ahead, we have begun to explore ways of working with our partners to assist the development of a new Congolese national army. We are committed to supporting a comprehensive and inclusive process of national and regional reconciliation. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, as in Sierra Leone, we recognize the regional dimensions of the conflict and we have been supporting African and international efforts to address them, including the peace process in Burundi.

In Angola, we have seen significant steps towards a sustainable political solution. It is essential that the Government of Angola take effective action on economic reform and governance.

The progress we have seen in these, the most long-running and intractable conflicts in Africa, shows that things are changing. It is a sign that the NEPAD principles are being put into practice. We welcome this determination. We are ready to work with it to put an end to conflict in Africa. African has huge potential; together we can work to realize it.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Anastassios Yannitsis, Alternate Minister for Foreign Affairs of Greece.

Mr. Yannitsis (Greece): Earlier this morning, the Foreign Minister of Denmark, in his capacity as President of the European Union, made a statement with which we agree. I therefore wish only to make some additional remarks.

Greece welcomes the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) as an African-led initiative that aims at the fulfilment of promises for Africa's development through domestic, regional and international partnerships. We believe we stand before

a new concept that has to succeed in implementing development strategies and improving donor-recipient relationships.

There is an urgent need for a new age in Africa's development to emerge. In our effort to fight poverty we have as tools the lessons learned from the decade of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (UN-NADAF), which showed us that ambitious goals for development and growth both inspire and serve to promote more committed efforts. NEPAD is the most pivotal of those goals. We welcome the inspiration provided by Algeria, Egypt, Nigeria, Senegal and South Africa, as well as the decisions of the Organization of African Unity and the strong international support expressed at the Group of Eight (G-8) Summit held in Kananaskis, which adopted the Africa Action Plan. We also welcome the contribution of major United Nations conferences, including the International Conference on Financing for Development and the World Summit on Sustainable Development, as well as the European Union process for a new platform to further develop relations between the European Union and Africa.

African ownership, partnership among African countries and with the international community and shared responsibilities are key elements for NEPAD's success.

Halving the proportion of people living in extreme poverty by 2015 is a very serious and important priority of the international community.

Tackling the problems of HIV/AIDS and other infectious diseases, along with dealing with such issues as the problem of external debt, the education of girls, human rights violations, limited resources, institution-building, bridging the infrastructure gap and creating larger markets in Africa, make up our main challenge. Our means lie within our political will, the accumulated experience of the agencies and organizations of the United Nations system and the coordinated efforts of all development partners. NEPAD gives us a chance to re-address, in a holistic and action-oriented manner, the problems that have afflicted the continent for centuries. With the identification of priority areas and with proposals for specific actions and programmes, Africa could assume an enhanced role on the global stage on the basis of sustainable, long-term development.

Last but not least, let me say that Africa's development will be one of the main priorities of Greece's agenda during its presidency of the European Union during the first half of 2003. We will do our utmost so that the upcoming European Union-Africa summit, to be held in April 2003, will not only increase cooperation between the two partners but will also produce tangible results to the benefit of the African continent.

Currently, Greece is contributing to the development of Africa through its participation in the European Union and through other international organizations. Furthermore, we are also contributing, within our financial means, to the Trust Fund for the Educational and Training Programme for Southern Africa, to the Trust Fund for the Transport and Communication Decade in Africa and to the Trust Fund for African Development. We are hoping that in the next year we will be able to double our national contributions to those three funds.

We believe that if NEPAD is combined constructively with already existing strategies and efforts, it will make the vision of this initiative a reality and fulfil its goals by as early as 2015 for the benefit of all people.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Nobutake Odano, Director-General for African Affairs of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Japan.

Mr. Odano (Japan): It is my privilege to have an opportunity to talk about Japan's cooperation with the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), which is a bold initiative by Africans for Africa's future.

Today the world recognizes that the problems Africa is facing are great challenges not only for the region itself but also for the international community as a whole.

Japan has been making efforts to revive global interest in Africa's issues through the process of the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) since the early 1990s, when "Afro-pessimism" and aid fatigue prevailed in the international community. We also believe the growing momentum within the Group of Eight (G-8) on Africa's issues, culminating in the G-8 Africa Action Plan, originated at the Kyusyu-Okinawa Summit meeting in

2000. That was where Japan, as the G-8 chair, took the initiative to invite leaders of African countries to an outreach session held in Tokyo. Japan had thus started to articulate the importance of African issues in the international arena within a new perspective. It therefore gives me great pleasure to discuss Africa's challenges today.

Japan promoted the TICAD process by hosting the First Tokyo International Conference on African Development in 1993, the second in 1998 and the TICAD ministerial-level meeting in 2001. Japan will convene TICAD III in October next year, which will mark the tenth year of the TICAD process. That process is a major pillar of Japan's cooperation for African development.

Throughout that 10-year period, Japan has consistently advocated the importance of ownership by Africa of its development and partnership with the international community which supports Africa's ownership. From that point of view, Japan welcomes the elaboration of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and the tangible efforts Africa is making under NEPAD, and regards them as a clear demonstration of Africa's ownership. Japan appreciates African leadership. Japan also appreciates the decision of African countries to introduce the African Peer Review Mechanism in order to ensure their own steady implementation of NEPAD.

As for the partnership with Africa, Japan continues to support NEPAD through the TICAD process. Japan offered to all stakeholders of African countries and their development partners the first opportunity to discuss NEPAD together on the occasion of the TICAD ministerial-level meeting last year in Tokyo. Furthermore, in June this year, Japan convened a TICAD-NEPAD dialogue in New York and started the new initiative to strengthen synergy between TICAD and NEPAD. Many members will recall that the Plan of Implementation adopted at the World Summit on Sustainable Development explicitly mentions the TICAD process and regards it as an important initiative that supports NEPAD.

Keeping in mind the G-8 Africa Action Plan in response to NEPAD, Japan announced its programme of solidarity between Japan and Africa in June, which defines Japan's concrete action for cooperation on Africa. In addition, Japan's Foreign Minister, Yoriko Kawaguchi, delivered a policy speech on Japan's cooperation for African development at the joint invitation of the African Union and the Economic Commission on Africa when she visited Ethiopia three weeks ago. On such occasions, Japan reiterates its commitment to cooperation based on human-centred development, Asia-Africa cooperation and peace consolidation efforts.

First, with regard to human-centred development in Africa, Japan makes consistent efforts in sectors such as education and health, recognizing that human resources development is the foundation of nation-building. Since TICAD II in 1998, Japan has carried out a $740 million five-year plan of grant aid. That assistance has enabled 2.4 million children to study in classrooms, 2.9 million people to have access to safe water and 215 million people to benefit from improved medical conditions. Among Japan's educational initiatives in Africa is its decision to extend assistance worth more than $2 billion over the next five years to low-income countries, including countries in Africa.

Indeed, through the TICAD process, Japan promotes Asia-Africa cooperation. A symbolic project in that regard is New Rice for Africa. Japan wishes to see the development experiences of East Asia shared by Africans and others. Of course, private-sector cooperation for African development will be promoted through the TICAD process.

In conclusion, let me emphasize that there will be no stability and prosperity in the world in the twenty-first century unless Africa's problems are resolved. Despite the severe constraints surrounding its official development assistance, Japan remains determined to work with Africa. At the same time, development cannot be sustained for long unless the African countries address the challenges and regard them as their own. We hope this meeting will reaffirm Africa's determination to steadily implement NEPAD and the international community's determination to support NEPAD. Japan would like to renew its commitment to advancing together with Africa, hand in hand, leading up to the TICAD III meeting in October next year.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now hear a statement by His Excellency Mr. Peter Tesch, chairman of the delegation of Australia.

Mr. Tesch (Australia): Australia warmly welcomes the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). Australia believes that NEPAD articulates an integrated African vision for a

new African future and a set of principles for achieving that vision. Created by Africans for Africans, it is a historic new partnership. Based on the principles of good political and economic governance, democracy and market-led economic growth, it deserves strong support.

NEPAD acknowledges that the primary responsibility for lifting Africa out of poverty lies with Africa itself. It is, therefore, qualitatively different from past initiatives designed to foster development in Africa that, regrettably, have failed to realize the goal of sustainable development.

Australia commends the forward-looking African leaders who recognized that development has to be underpinned by a strong commitment to international standards of good governance, sound economic management, respect for human rights and the rule of law, peace and security.

It is vital that these laudable principles be realized through real commitment by African countries to their implementation and, importantly, through support by the rest of the international community for that endeavour. Those commitments will be fundamental in helping Africa create an environment where new investment and economic growth can flourish. They will also assist in preventing and ending endemic armed conflict and in overcoming the development challenges that Africa faces.

Australia is encouraged by the commitments embodied in the Declaration on Democracy, Political, Economic and Corporate Governance, issued by the NEPAD heads of State in June 2002. We are also encouraged by the African Peer Review Mechanism. The early and consistent implementation of those principles will establish their credibility and will be a key part of the success of NEPAD. It needs to be said that the opposite would also be true.

NEPAD's focus on securing and reaping the benefits of further trade liberalization is clear-sighted, necessary and welcome. Trade liberalization represents one of the single most important steps that can be taken to help eradicate poverty and encourage sustainable development.

Australia is a leading advocate of trade liberalization, particularly in the field of agriculture, a sector of special importance to African countries. We have long advocated ending farm subsidies in developed countries. Not only are those subsidies hugely expensive — the amount spent on them is more than Africa's combined economic output — but they are also highly damaging to Africa's development prospects. Australia will continue to work with developing country partners to create a fair international trading system in agricultural products, including in the Doha trade round.

While trade liberalization and private-sector-led growth are crucial, we recognize the importance of development assistance programmes. HIV/AIDS is a serious threat to development and will remain a major focus of Australia's development assistance programme for Africa. Australia's other priorities, governance and education, including working through the African Virtual University in Nairobi, and efforts to bridge the digital divide are also relevant to NEPAD priorities.

NEPAD provides a promising and practical path towards Africa's sustainable development. The challenge for Africans, and indeed for all of us in the international community, is to combine our efforts to help make it work.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser, the chairman of the delegation of Qatar.

Mr. Al-Nasser (Qatar) (*spoke in Arabic*): I should like to express my pleasure at participating in this high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly to consider ways and means to support the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD).

First of all, on behalf of my Government, I should like thank the international community for entrusting the State of Qatar with the honour of holding the World Trade Organization's Fourth Ministerial Conference in Doha, which produced the Doha Development Agenda. That Agenda laid the foundation for conducting intensive and important negotiations on a variety of issues in the areas of trade, investment flows and aid, alleviating the debt burden, capacity-building and improving developing countries' access to international markets.

The Conference strongly emphasized the principles and objectives set out in the Marrakesh Agreement, which established the foundation of the World Trade Organization (WTO). Furthermore, the

participants pledged to reject protectionism, confirming the key role that trade can play in promoting economic development, and in fighting poverty, by acknowledging the need of all our peoples to benefit from the increasing opportunities and benefits of prosperity offered by the multilateral trading system. The Conference also gave participants the opportunity to devote special attention to the various problems facing African and developing countries in particular, as well as to the formidable obstacles hindering their efforts to achieve economic and social development.

The Doha Conference succeeded in achieving some positive results. It enabled the least developed countries, the overwhelming majority of which are in Africa, as well as other developing countries, including African nations, to win important concessions, such as the removal of obstacles to their commodities — particularly agricultural goods, the main exports of African States — and services. The Conference adopted a definitive programme of action covering the period up to 2005, and included a request to the WTO Director-General to submit by the end of 2002 a progress report on the implementation of the programme of action.

Since the Secretary-General submitted to the General Assembly his report entitled "The causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa" (A/52/871), the international community has devoted special attention to African issues, ranging from peacemaking, post-conflict peace-building and sustainable growth and development, to mobilizing resources for Africa's development. In that context, we highly appreciate and value the Secretary-General's efforts and initiatives aimed at ending conflicts, building peace and alleviating the suffering inflicted on Africa by such conflicts.

However, Africa's problems are not confined to wars and conflicts; they also involve the economic and social areas. For instance, 44 per cent or more of Africa's population lives in abject poverty, and the entire continent is threatened by the spread of infectious diseases and epidemics, particularly HIV/AIDS. Malaria and other endemic diseases also pose a grave threat to the lives of millions of people. In that connection, we appreciate and value the efforts of the United Nations system agencies, including the Bretton Woods institutions, to assist African countries in several areas, including sustainable human development, health, education, promoting good governance, strengthening capacities for the management of financial and business establishments and macroeconomic management, enhancing transparency and fighting corruption.

African countries' efforts to achieve sustainable development and to solve the aforementioned problems are hindered by foreign debt burdens that altogether exceed the continent's gross national income of goods and services by more than 30 per cent.

International support is of utmost importance and is urgently needed in order to increase official development assistance to the level of 0.7 per cent of gross domestic product to which developed countries committed themselves in several conferences — the most recent of which was the International Conference on Financing for Development, held at Monterrey, Mexico. It is however, African countries themselves that will have to overcome the immediate challenges facing the African continent.

Within the United Nations, we are extremely pleased that the decision of the Administrative Committee on Coordination not to launch further initiatives and to harmonize existing initiatives concerning Africa persuaded African leaders to work towards establishing the New Partnership for Africa's Development.

Recognizing their responsibilities and acknowledging the roles their Governments should assume to address these challenges, African leaders held a special summit in Sirte, Libya, in 1999 that adopted the Sirte Declaration on the establishment of the African Union and its relevant institutions. At the Lusaka Summit, held in 2001, the African Union was officially declared, replacing the Organization of African Unity.

With renewed determination, the concept of NEPAD was approved and a mechanism was established to coordinate and harmonize various initiatives for Africa. We are optimistic that the determination shown by African leaders to end wars and conflicts, to establish peace and security and to institute good governance, democracy and respect for human rights, as prerequisites for development, are signs that the Partnership's objectives will come to fruition.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency The Honourable Mr. Arjun J.B. Singh, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of Nepal.

Mr. Singh (Nepal): Let me begin by congratulating the President on his well-deserved election to the presidency of the fifty-seventh session of the General Assembly.

Africa is a rich continent of poor peoples. Nature has been generous with Africa. However, poverty has decimated its peoples. Hunger, HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis have wasted its populations. Conflicts have sapped its strength. Long humiliation and exploitation have added insult to its injury.

Nepal applauds the African peoples as they engage in the task of redeeming their dignity and changing their destiny. We stood with Africa in its fight against colonialism and apartheid. We now stand with Africa as it takes a quantum leap towards transforming its future with the launching of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD).

NEPAD is Africa's ambitious and powerful response to its many challenges. Led, owned and managed by the Africans, the initiative aims to do many things: resolve conflicts, strengthen democracy, ensure development and improve governance. This is, by far, the largest enterprise intended to insure regional peace and prosperity.

Implementing NEPAD will test the tenacity and resolve of the African leadership and management. The need to involve Governments, businesses and non-governmental organizations will make it a complex operation. Resource constraints and competing demands will require delicate prioritization.

Conflicts, hunger, poverty, HIV/AIDS and malaria must receive immediate attention to save lives and to pave the way for durable peace, development and justice.

The peer review mechanism is a potent tool to enforce collective self-discipline. Politically sensitive, it will require ample doses of guts and candour, as well as necessary safeguards against its selective use.

Broad-based and effective institutional arrangements will be essential for NEPAD's execution. The African Union should provide the structural link.

Its own efforts apart, Africa will need considerably more external support to produce the intended results. Encouragingly, from the Millennium Summit to the Doha, Monterrey and Johannesburg conferences, Africa has received all the right sound bites. Fulfilment of these pledges is the urgent imperative.

Nepal calls on development partners to exert their political will to meet their commitments on development assistance, debt relief, market access and capacity-building. Special attention should go to the least developed countries. The world owes a debt of conscience to Africa, both as the cradle of humanity and as a victim of history.

The promotion of South-South cooperation will also be valuable to raise up Africa. The United Nations system deserves appreciation for its help to Africa by carrying out its own programmes and drawing world attention to the continent. It should redouble its efforts in both these areas as well as to facilitate South-South cooperation.

The President took the Chair.

We all share a common humanity and common destiny in this global village. Common sense dictates that we join forces for peace, prosperity and justice, in Africa and around the world. Nepal is willing to work for these cherished goals and for NEPAD's success.

The President: The Assembly will now hear an address by Ambassador Lee Ho-jin of the Republic of Korea.

Mr. Lee (Republic of Korea): At the outset, I wish to join previous speakers in highlighting the importance of this full day's high-level meeting on African development. The past year has heralded significant structural and political change in the field of African development with the launching of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and the transformation of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) into the African Union (AU).

My delegation commends NEPAD on its commitment to the African countries' individual and collective ownership of their own development. NEPAD is now moving from its planning phase into the implementation phase, where other initiatives have failed to sink sound roots. At this juncture, it is crucial that we address the challenges before us and cooperate in order to find constructive solutions.

The foremost challenge to African development is conflict and civil strife. We welcome the Secretary-General's assessment that security must be elevated to the highest priority in African affairs and that NEPAD's economic initiatives must be bolstered by strong institutions for conflict prevention and management. As transparency and democracy are prerequisite to sound economic growth, good governance is another key to the successful implementation of NEPAD. In this regard, we commend NEPAD's peer review mechanism, under which African leaders will hold each other mutually accountable for enforcing the principles of good governance.

The cornerstone of NEPAD is the new partnership between the African countries, the international community and the United Nations, as well as among themselves. The policy framework of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) clearly underscores the importance of the African countries' ownership of their development. Accordingly, at the country level the priorities of NEPAD must be translated from rhetoric into steadfast national policies and programmes. The African Governments should demonstrate their commitment to NEPAD by allocating the significant financial resources from their national budgets needed for initiating and sustaining the new partnership programmes.

The role of the United Nations in NEPAD will be to support the efforts made by African countries themselves. The relevant organs of the United Nations system are obliged to share their substantial knowledge and experience in these matters with the African countries.

It is important for the United Nations to adopt a comprehensive approach that addresses the issues of peace and security, good governance, poverty eradication and human rights in their support for NEPAD.

As emphasized at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, the international community should fulfil its commitment to NEPAD through financial support and assistance in capacity building. We welcome an increase in official development assistance to match the financial commitments of the African countries to their national NEPAD programmes. We would also like to see efforts on the part of the international community to expand market access to African commodities in order to encourage trade.

The international community should share its experience and expertise in the important area of human resources development with the African countries. This cooperation is particularly important in the field of information and communications technology (ICT), which has become an indispensable means of distributing the benefits of globalization.

For its part, the Republic of Korea has made efforts to share its development experiences and technological expertise with the developing countries. The Korean Government has participated in a number of programmes with particular emphasis on ICT. We have helped build regional information and telecommunications centres and supported various ICT training projects in Africa.

In conclusion, the Republic of Korea would like to renew its commitment to providing necessary assistance to the African countries wherever possible. We remain confident that the resolute commitment and political will of the African countries, reinforced by an effective response from the international community, will help NEPAD progress.

The President: The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Gabriel Valdés, chairman of the delegation of Chile.

Mr. Valdés (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): It is a special honour for me to address this special session devoted to Africa. Despite geographical distance, Chile has been very close to the African continent since the beginning of the process of decolonization and later, in the bodies created by the United Nations for that purpose.

Equally, whenever we have been on the Security Council we have focused particularly on the problems of the African continent, doing everything we could to contribute, along with the region and the international community, in the search for solutions to the problems and conflicts faced by Africa.

Nonetheless, on this occasion we are united for a different purpose. This new initiative is first and foremost a proposal from Africans, and should be understood as such.

The Chilean Government gives major importance and priority to NEPAD. For this reason we would like

to join in the expressions of recognition, support and encouragement from the international community to the African countries on the occasion of this initiative.

This initiative — from within the continent itself — is the direct result of the work of institutions such as the African Union. It places the Africa of the twenty-first century in a new dimension based on the renewed commitment on the part of its Governments to generate their own conditions and enable them to create the well-being of their peoples.

We are sure that based on NEPAD's objectives — including economic development aimed at reducing levels of poverty by fifty percent by the year 2015 — African countries will receive sustained support from the international community to address urgent needs of the continent. In this manner, Africa will be granted its rightful place to benefit from the world economy and globalization.

However, it will not be possible to achieve NEPAD's objectives without a much-needed opening of trade with an end to the subsidies that negatively affect African products. This should be accompanied by the promotion of exports from the region, particularly in agriculture and textiles. In this manner, growth, which will attract the necessary foreign investment will, in its turn, contribute to increased growth.

It is also a good sign that NEPAD includes in its design a set of initiatives of a regional scope with important continent-wide programmes such as gender equality, the fight against HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria among others.

We believe that the implementation process of NEPAD leaves space to explore initiatives leading to the broadening of Africa's relationship with the countries of Latin America, in particular with the Rio Group. In this manner regional dialogue will be generated, leading to the formulation of new and innovative forms of cooperation and assistance in the areas of public policy, promotion of trade and other areas where Latin American experience could be of use.

The Economic Commission for Africa and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean could be charged together to formulate proposals to take this initiative forward. Even though Chile is a small country on the world stage, it holds a firm position — together with other members of the international community — in favour of strengthening multilateralism through implementation of joint action allowing the creation of policies which will help us establish a more developed, equitable and safe world.

The President: The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Ouch Borith, chairman of the delegation of Cambodia.

Mr. Ouch (Cambodia) (*spoke in French*): Mr. President, may I first offer you my warmest congratulations on your election to the presidency of the fifty-seventh session of the General Assembly. I am confident that under your wise leadership and guidance we will have a productive and successful 57th session which will contribute to solutions for the many issues confronting us.

May I at the outset congratulate the African Governments who have launched the New Partnership for Africa's Development, (NEPAD), to eradicate poverty and to place their countries, both individually and collectively, on a path of sustainable growth and development. The adoption of NEPAD, together with the birth of the African Union, will undoubtedly give a strong impetus to Africa in striving for rapid economic growth and secure its prompt inclusion in the globalization process.

We are meeting today to give our full support to NEPAD. This session is being held at the same time as the final review of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (UN-NADAF – 1991), adopted by the General Assembly in 1991.

However, NEPAD is unique, in that it was conceived and developed by Africans for Africans. We wish to stress that this initiative has a very great chance of success. Our own experience in Cambodia is that, while we are very grateful to our international partners for helping Cambodia move forward, true reconciliation, peace and development can be achieved only if we Cambodians decide to do so ourselves.

We are very grateful to our African brothers for this opportunity to review the plan of action of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) at the United Nations, so that it can receive the endorsement of the international community and so that we can forge a true partnership with Africa for the effective implementation of NEPAD.

NEPAD seeks to generate new forms of cooperation between Africa and the developed world. It seeks genuine partnership between Africa and its external partners, based on mutual accountability. NEPAD reflects a wide-ranging vision for promoting better governance, ending Africa's conflicts and wars, eradicating poverty and placing African countries, both individually and collectively, on the path of sustainable development.

The Secretary-General's report contains specific proposals on the modalities of future United Nations engagement with the New Partnership for Africa's Development. We welcome such relationships, which will take place at the country, regional and global levels, and hope that they will be further strengthened. At high-level meetings, pledges have been made to increase official development assistance, to open up developed-country markets to the exports of developing countries, and to reorient the world financial and world trade systems in favour of development.

However, such pledges have been made before. Now we need action. The pledges must be fulfilled, something that has been sorely lacking in the past both worldwide and, especially, for Africa. The objectives and priorities identified in NEPAD should be seen in the context of, inter alia, the goals and targets agreed at the Millennium Summit and set out in the Millennium Declaration, and at the Monterrey and Doha conferences, and meetings on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development. Having recently emerged from a prolonged period of conflict and turmoil, we in Cambodia realize the link between conflict prevention and the promotion of sustainable development.

(*spoke in English*)

We thank the Secretary-General for causing the independent evaluation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (UN-NADAF) to be undertaken by 12 eminent personalities, and for reporting on it to the General Assembly in document A/57/156. We note with gratification that important progress has been made in the implementation of UN-NADAF in the areas of economic and political reform, private sector development, the strengthening of civil society, economic cooperation and regional integration. However, we note that in other areas, such as controlling the HIV/AIDS pandemic, the resolution of Africa's debt problem, official development assistance flows, foreign direct investment and other private-sector flows, market access, agriculture, food security and the diversification of African commodities, there is a lack of progress in many respects, caused by a lack of external support for UN-NADAF.

We therefore urge the international community, especially the donor countries, to continue aid to Africa now by assisting NEPAD, and in fact to step up such assistance by providing debt relief, increasing the flows of official development assistance and foreign direct investment, and by providing market access for African exports. The process of the enhanced Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Debt Initiative, aimed at speedy debt relief, should be supplemented by other efforts to find a permanent debt exit strategy for Africa. The report on the review of UN-NADAF also contains proposals for the modalities of cooperation with NEPAD. It is always useful to learn from what went right, while avoiding the mistakes of the past.

I believe that our African brothers, with their high level of determination and their devotion, will certainly contribute to the main success in the implementation of NEPAD for the sake of peace, stability and prosperity for all African brothers.

The President: I recall that the Assembly has agreed to a time limit of five minutes for all statements in this debate, and I appeal to all remaining speakers to respect that time limit. The Assembly will now hear a statement by His Excellency Mr. Sorajak Kasemsuvan, Advisor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs and chairman of the delegation of Thailand.

Mr. Kasemsuvan (Thailand): Thailand joins the rest of the international community in welcoming the strong resolve of our African brothers in advancing the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), initiated in 2001. We also take this opportunity to express our congratulations to all African countries on launching the African Union on 10 July this year.

Today's high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly to consider how to support NEPAD reflects the high importance that countries Members of the United Nations attach to Africa and to its efforts to find home-grown solutions to political and economic challenges. Today's meeting symbolizes the will and commitment of the international community to cooperate with Africa in its effort to overcome the

difficult conditions that for too long have brought hardship and frustration to the people of this great continent.

The international community and various groupings, including the Group of Eight (G-8), have already recognized the unique character of NEPAD and its potential for generating effective solutions to the challenges faced by Africa. NEPAD's vision as an African-driven process working in partnership with the international community and its emphasis on democracy, development and governance are just two of the many elements that make NEPAD different from past initiatives and potentially a more dynamic and credible framework within which to produce concrete outcomes.

We are pleased to express Thailand's support for NEPAD and our readiness to cooperate more closely with our African brethren in realizing the goals and aspirations set forth in the NEPAD framework.

Thailand attaches great importance to Africa as part of our Look West policy, and it welcomes the recent positive developments that have taken place in the region. We have always looked towards enhancing our existing relations with African countries and developing new ones on the basis of mutual benefit. Our interest in Africa is also reflected in the technical assistance that we have provided over the years to several African countries in specific areas where we have expertise, such as agriculture, HIV/AIDS and public health, education and human resources development.

NEPAD will add a new dimension and greater dynamism to our relationship with Africa. One area of cooperation that can be explored is that of trilateral cooperation, in which Thailand could provide appropriate technical assistance in partnership with the donor community in specific areas such as HIV/AIDS, public health and agriculture to individual African countries, based on their needs.

We hope that specific actions and programmes under NEPAD and existing activities and projects under other frameworks will complement one another, and that all initiatives related to Africa's development at the national, subregional, regional and international levels will bear fruit and bring lasting peace, social progress and greater prosperity to the African people.

But in the end, the success of NEPAD will depend on the political will of the African countries and of the international community, particularly the donor community, to stay the course and to build a viable and enduring partnership. The potential and possibilities for NEPAD and the great African continent are enormous. Thailand will play its role within its means and in conjunction with the international community to cooperate with Africa to help realize that potential and those possibilities. In a globalized world, where the challenges of one continent are in the end the common challenges of all mankind, certainly we cannot afford to do any less than this.

The President: The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Felipe Paolillo, chairman of the delegation of Uruguay.

Mr. Paolillo (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): Uruguay expresses its sincere hope that the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) will be the beginning of a new phase in which the international community will carry forward the fight against poverty in Africa with greater efficiency and achieve greater and more effective results in the promotion of lasting peace and sustainable development on the continent.

Cooperation in Africa, as it has existed so far, has not produced results commensurate with the efforts expended by the international community or with the resources thus employed. NEPAD offers new and encouraging possibilities for eradicating poverty on the continent and for setting the African countries on the path to growth and sustainable development in order to put an end to their marginalization in the process of globalization.

NEPAD is a specifically African proposal, of wide scope, encompassing the political and economic domains. It will orient the actions of the United Nations and the international community towards development priorities in the region, such as those agreed upon by the Heads of State and Government at the 2000 Millennium Summit.

Uruguay, which is currently undergoing a very grave economic and financial crisis whose solution will also require external cooperation, obviously cannot commit to ambitious cooperation efforts or contribute economic resources to NEPAD. Nevertheless, my country, faithful to its commitment to multilateralism, will continue to participate in international cooperation

actions for development to the extent of its real possibilities.

In fact, as it has been doing for 50 years, Uruguay is involved in many peace operations, convinced that building lasting peace is crucial to development — in any region of the world — because peace and security is closely and indissolubly linked to economic and social development.

On the African continent, military and police forces from Uruguay, as well as Uruguayan civilian personnel, have been deployed to Rwanda, Liberia, Mozambique, Angola, Sierra Leone and Western Sahara. Our most recent involvement, in which we contributed the largest contingents, has, for two years, been in the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, to which Uruguay is the principal contributor, providing 1,500 troops, men and women, as well as transport material and equipment. Our contribution also includes water purification systems manufactured in Uruguay, which have proved to function with complete satisfaction, thus solving the serious problems in several zones of the Democratic Republic of the Congo caused by the shortage or lack of potable water.

We recently signed with Angola a bilateral cooperation agreement on agriculture and livestock to offer to that country technological assistance and technical capacity in areas such as crop farming, the livestock and dairy industries, seed production technology, combating plant disease, phyto-sanitary legislation, irrigation and water resources.

We must ensure that the coordinated effort of the international community is matched by a secure flow of resources in order to guarantee its success, as was agreed upon by the heads of State and Government in the Millennium Declaration. We hope that this initiative will accomplish the goals set and that we will be proud of its achievements.

The President: The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Djessan Philippe Djangone-Bi, chairman of the delegation of the Côte d'Ivoire.

Mr. Djangone-Bi (Côte d'Ivoire) (*spoke in French*): It is gratifying to note that, in its rightful quest for sustainable development, Africa can count on the international community. Africa, which contains the largest number of developing countries, places great hope in the ensemble of activities and measures undertaken by the international community to ensure sustainable development, which Africa needs in order to escape the vicious circle of poverty.

The most significant fact in this process of fighting poverty remains today, without doubt, the taking into account of the provisions of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). As a whole, NEPAD is designed by Africans themselves within the framework of the African Union and takes into account their specific situations. It offers a series of measures to fight poverty effectively in order to promote the economic, social and human development of the peoples of Africa. To this end, the Africans place their hope, in particular, on integrated regional development supported fundamentally by the private sector.

NEPAD is an instrument designed, among other things, to facilitate North-South partnerships aimed at the sustainable development of Africa. It aims to promote new international investments while encouraging respect for human rights, good governance and democracy.

Chapter VIII of the Plan of Implementation of the Johannesburg Summit is devoted to NEPAD, thereby affirming the international community's support for it.

Côte d'Ivoire would also like to welcome the adoption by the Group of Eight (G-8) at its recent summit at Kananaskis, Canada of an Action Plan serving as the basis for the strengthening of cooperation and partnership between the G-8 and Africa.

Côte d'Ivoire is also convinced that the effective and sustained implementation by all parties concerned of the conclusions and recommendations of the Fourth Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization on trade in Doha, of the International Conference on Financing for Development in Monterrey and of the World Summit for Sustainable Development in Johannesburg will contribute to achieving the goals for growth, progress, development, political stability and peace in Africa.

It is high time that we act because reflection without action is sterile.

The President: The Assembly will now hear an address by Her Excellency Mrs. Irma Loemban Tobing-Klein, chairperson of the delegation of Suriname.

Mrs. Loemban Tobing-Klein (Suriname): I am here today on behalf of the Government and the peoples of my country, Suriname, to express, pledge and celebrate solidarity — solidarity with the Governments and the peoples of the African continent, our sisters and brothers, who — as their leaders stated during the general debate — are determined to emerge from poverty, hunger, famine, destructive and deadly diseases such as HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis and to focus on infrastructure development, health, education, the protection of the environment, new technologies, sound energy policies, access to developing markets, economic growth and strong partnerships between Government, civil society and non-governmental organizations. They are also determined to build a strong and lasting culture of peace, democracy, good governance, respect for human rights and accountability, as the surest and — in many cases — the most rapid path towards sustainable human development.

Suriname feels a sense of responsibility towards Africa and the African people because we share one history. A substantial part of our country's population is descended from Africa and our drums still speak the same language. Africans have gone to Suriname and felt at home, because our cultures resemble each other so closely. We are happy to accommodate African fishermen in our country because they share their knowledge with us, thereby boosting our fishery sector.

We are also here today as representatives of the Government and the peoples of my country, Suriname, to congratulate our sisters and brothers from the African continent and the entire world community, on the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), on the birth of the African Union and on their strong determination to make a commitment to Africa, to develop Africa and to prove that Africa can eventually become a true example of political, economic and social transformation, on the basis of its own cultural wealth and its precious natural and human resources.

We congratulate Africa on the growing solidarity among the African leaders and peoples — solidarity that was demonstrated in particular during the general debate, when we joined long lines of people, many dressed in beautiful African robes, to express our felicitations.

Suriname needs to express its solidarity with African countries and to support such initiatives as NEPAD because our countries, wealthy as they are in natural resources and human potential, suffer from similar difficulties in terms of economic development and poverty eradication. We are fighting the same fight against the HIV/AIDS pandemic, malaria and tuberculosis. We feel the pain of the countries of Africa, who see their forests disappearing and their fertile agricultural lands turning into deserts. We share the concern of the many African people who do not have access to clean drinking water and reasonable sanitation. We feel the African people's grief, especially that of older people, women and children, who are suffering as a result of wars.

The support of the international community, including the Bretton Woods institutions and donor countries, working in true partnership, and significant injections of outside investment are needed in order to meet special needs of Africa, as embodied in the Millennium Development Goals — the basis for the development of Africa and the entire world — as stated so eloquently by Secretary-General Kofi Annan in his address this morning. The Secretary-General made us realize this morning that if there is no economic development for Africa, there will not, and cannot, be sustainable human development for the world.

It is well known that developing countries cannot fully meet the needs of their peoples on the basis of their own financial resources. They must be assisted. We no longer need lip service; the time has come for real action.

Secretary-General Kofi Annan's recent visit to various African countries encouraged and inspired us to participate in this high-level meeting. Indeed, we must take responsibility for one another, especially the poor, the vulnerable and the oppressed, as fellow members of a single human family, as the Secretary-General said at the opening of the Johannesburg Summit.

It is because of the need for support and partnership that we co-sponsored the draft resolution on the United Nations Declaration on the New Partnership for Africa's Development. We should do more than pay lip service. We must, therefore, actively combine our efforts in order to ensure that African people enjoy their right to development — their human

right to live a life in dignity and respect. We want to see Africa prosper.

The President: The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Milos Alcalay, chairperson of the delegation of Venezuela.

Mr. Alcalay (Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): I should like first of all to congratulate you, Mr. President, and to assure you of my delegation's full cooperation and best wishes for success as you discharge your responsibility in guiding the work of the General Assembly at its fifty-seventh session.

We welcome the fact that the General Assembly has convened this high-level plenary meeting to consider how the United Nations system can support the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). The international community is joining in that effort in a spirit of optimism. It is an innovative approach aimed at achieving objectives of great importance for the peace and security of the peoples of Africa.

African leaders conceived of NEPAD as a dynamic common vision, firmly convinced of their urgent duty to alleviate poverty and lead their countries, both individually and collectively, towards sustainable development, while participating actively in the global economy and in political decision-making at the international level.

The vision is that of a united and strong Africa that recognizes the need to develop a partnership between Governments and all elements of civil society, including and involving women, young people and the private sector, as the main actors in achieving those objectives and in strengthening solidarity and cohesion.

We note with enthusiasm the determination of Africans to overcome the difficulties and obstacles that the continent has been facing in terms of socio-economic underdevelopment and exclusion.

NEPAD is a source of inspiration, because it is based on the principles and values of democracy, good governance, respect for human rights and the promotion of peace, security and stability as prerequisites for the achievement of development and the integration of the continent into the world economy.

Even though in the past there have been initiatives that targeted the objectives set out so resolutely by NEPAD today, this new effort to achieve the goal of development and overcome the most oppressive problems of the region is substantially different from past efforts.

With NEPAD, the Africans themselves are designing the programme, which is to be directed and administered by Africans. It promotes partnerships among Governments, the private sector and civil society in the quest for new forms of cooperation and in defining interests with the developed world on the basis of mutual concerns and benefits. All of this is set against the backdrop of the clear link between development and stability and based on the momentum created by the United Nations system to achieve this goal with the help of the new methodologies that are being introduced.

Allow me to point out that, as Chairman of the Group of 77, I am particularly pleased to be able to state that we supported, as an expression of solidarity, the Declaration that will be adopted at the end of this High-level Meeting.

Venezuela fervently hopes that this broad-ranging pact to achieve peace, security and stability in the region will be successful and that it will serve as an example and a source of inspiration to the international community so that it can address, with respect and with due consideration for the African continent, the steps and reviews that will have to be undertaken in future.

NEPAD should be given an appropriate place within the United Nations, where, through coordinated efforts, the foundation has been laid for consistent and coordinated work among the principal organs, and where various kinds of initiatives and programmes are under way that address areas and sectors of priority for Africa.

With international support for the New Partnership and the systematic implementation of its programmes, the international community will contribute to the resolution of the problems and critical situations that are confronting the peoples of Africa, thereby bringing about the peace and security that all so ardently desire.

NEPAD, together with the African Union — for which the Government of Venezuela also expresses its support and to which it wishes every success — will provide sound bases for the achievement of the proposed objectives. We believe that NEPAD's success will open possibilities for South-South cooperation and

give rise to creative and promising mechanisms for cooperation to achieve development objectives.

My country will continue closely to monitor the development of this initiative, as it is convinced that its mechanisms and programmes will be harmonized in such a way as to build a new reality, in accordance with the guiding principles of the Millennium Summit, which were approved by our heads of State.

The President: The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mahamane Maiga, Adviser to the Minister for Foreign Affairs and chairman of the delegation of Mali.

Mr. Maiga (Mali) (*spoke in French*): The General Assembly has chosen for this debate the theme of support for the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). I should like first of all to underline the particular importance that my country attaches to NEPAD, which offers Africa a new opportunity at a time when that continent is attempting to begin the third millennium by laying down the bases for sustainable development through an innovative approach.

Indeed, given the backwardness of the continent in many sectors, of its high level of indebtedness, of the conflicts and natural disasters and of the difficult situation of its peoples, African political leaders have taken the initiative to reverse the trend by elaborating a plan for development in a new spirit, that is, NEPAD. This new vision for a new Africa, which is sustained by a political commitment clearly expressed by African leaders, in based on partnership between Africa and the international community.

NEPAD defines a strategy for development focused on four priority sectors: infrastructures, agriculture, education and health. Entirely designed by Africans in order to improve the living conditions of Africans, NEPAD is in reality a comprehensive and integrated development plan that deals with Africa's social, economic and political priorities.

The plan's objectives are clearly identified and are centred on the values of democracy, good governance, poverty reduction, the eradication of the HIV-AIDS pandemic and of malaria, the maintenance of peace — all of which will make possible the attainment of the goals of the Millennium Summit throughout the African continent.

By adopting NEPAD, a genuine overall strateg framework expressing the development choices ma by Africa itself within the framework of the Afric Union, the African continent has made it clear that wishes henceforth to be a fully fledged partner in t international community and intends fully to play role in an international context characterized globalization of the economy.

However, the efforts made by Africa itse however relevant they may be, will not produce t expected results if they do not benefit from favourable international economic environment a from consistent support from the internation community, as well as from the translation into real of the recommendations of the Third United Natio Conference on the Least Developed Countrie the International Conference on Financing Development and the Johannesburg Summit.

In this respect, the measures taken by the G Summit at Kananaskis represent the first response the G-8 to the process of Africa's recovery throu NEPAD. Likewise, we welcome the decision of t European Union to increase gradually the level of official development assistance to 0.7 per cent of gro national product. We welcome also the decision of t United States Government to increase significantly t level of United States aid to developing countries a to facilitate access to United States markets, as grant to African States through the African Growth a Opportunity Act.

We express the sincere wish that these genero initiatives will be given concrete embodiment in ord to contribute to the achievement of the developme objectives contained in the Millennium Declaratio because Africa's situation requires that special effo be made.

The parties concerned and Africa's partners mu endorse and give their full support to the Afric initiative. The various commitments that they w undertake in this respect will make it possible Africa to move ahead and to build its future in ord better to integrate itself into the world economy a strive for the progress of humanity.

Indeed, the efforts of African States require favourable international environment, which impl adequate and better-distributed flows of forei direct investment in those countries. Developme requirements must also be better taken into account

the World Trade Organization's work programmes. A substantial increase will be required in official development assistance, concrete measures for debt alleviation will need to be taken, and the global international monetary, financial and trade system will need to be harmonized and strengthened.

My delegation is convinced that we must work together to support the political will and the realism shown by African Governments in their decision to undertake robust economic and political reforms in order to give fresh hope to the men and women of Africa, who are determined to shoulder their share of the responsibility for the development of the continent.

In this respect, NEPAD represents an opportunity for Africa, in the throes of its rebirth, to take up the challenges of globalization and of integration into the world economy.

Mali fervently hopes that this session will make it possible to lay the foundation for finding solutions to Africa's problems, which are also the problems of the world as a whole. Mali will also contribute to the debates to come on this subject, in particular the final review and appraisal of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in 1990s.

The President: The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Hasmy Agam, the chairman of the delegation of Malaysia.

Mr. Hasmy (Malaysia): Malaysia congratulates the leaders and peoples of Africa for their initiative on the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD).

We view NEPAD as a bold effort to halt the marginalization of Africa from the process of globalization and integration in the world economy. NEPAD is a reflection of the commitment of African leaders and their partners to building a strong and enduring culture of democracy, respect for human rights and sustained economic growth. It enhances the sense of realism and urgency required for this task to provide Africa with a unifying and home-grown framework for the future development of the continent. It represents a determined effort by Africa to take its destiny in its own hands, in partnership with the international community.

The Millennium Declaration emphasized the international imperative of addressing the special needs of Africa. We therefore urge the international community to fully support the NEPAD initiative by assisting Africans in their efforts to eradicate poverty and to achieve sustainable development. The international community should, as a matter of urgency, give its strong support to emerging democracies in Africa, to encouraging regional and subregional mechanisms for preventing conflict and promoting political stability and to ensuring a reliable flow of resources for peacekeeping operations.

Poverty eradication is an indispensable requirement for sustainable development. Malaysia believes that, more than anywhere else, Africa requires that the poverty reduction goal agreed to in the Millennium Declaration be achieved. Malaysia will continue to play a modest role in enhancing cooperation with African countries through our training programme. We will continue to exchange views with our African partners on enhancing our cooperation and partnership programmes, including through the Langkawi International Dialogue.

In the context of South-South cooperation, Malaysia will continue to encourage its private sector to take an active role in promoting closer economic ties with African countries for mutual benefit. We hope that this can be pursued through the creation of a conducive environment based on the "smart partnership approach" involving Governments, the private sector and civil society.

Given the many challenges in the implementation of the World Food Summit goal of halving the number of undernourished people by the year 2015, it is imperative that the current trends towards desertification and land degradation be arrested and reversed through the necessary financial assistance and transfer of technology. We urge the international financial institutions and the Global Environment Facility (GEF) to substantially increase the financing of the agricultural sector and for the full implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and other relevant Conventions.

The test of any initiative lies in its implementation. The lack of follow-up action and the necessary means of implementation have been major limiting factors in the realization of previous initiatives in support of Africa. For Africa to achieve the Millennium poverty reduction target alone, an annual resource gap estimated at over $60 billion has to be

bridged. Collective efforts must be made to mobilize the much-needed resources, both domestically and internationally, particularly through human resources development, diversification of Africa's production and exports, increase in the level of official development assistance, debt relief, private capital flows and improved infrastructure. We believe that building infrastructure is a necessary precondition for sustained economic growth. Given the constraints facing African countries, we urge the United Nations system and the international community, in particular donor countries, to assist in Africa's infrastructural development and to help achieve the full implementation of NEPAD.

A safe and secure world cannot be achieved if Africa, an integral and important part of the whole, continues to be mired in poverty and destitution. The NEPAD initiative is a serious and determined effort on the part of the African leaders and their peoples to chart their own future. The international community must play its role and show its full support for the implementation of NEPAD if Africa is to realize its potential and the promise of a more humane and stable world for all.

The President: The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Adolfo Aguilar Zinser, chairman of the delegation of Mexico.

Mr. Aguilar Zinser (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): The holding of this plenary session is an explicit recognition of the fact that the development of Africa is a shared responsibility of the entire community of nations. It is also recognition of the fact that our efforts should focus on the priority tasks and programmes defined by the countries of Africa themselves.

It is Africans who are masters of their own destiny, and it is up to them to lay down their path. This is why Mexico welcomes the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) as a vision of the new democratic African leaders, as the fruit of a new collective will to strive for transparency and the rule of law and as an expansion of the intention of all Africans to work together.

NEPAD is the awaited signal for the international community, without excuse or delay, to mobilize to meet all its longstanding commitments. Nothing that we have done thus far has yielded the results we had hoped for. In spite of the adoption of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s, the gross domestic product (GDP) fell far below target, and the social situation continues to be disquieting. There are many causes for this failure; it is up to us to remedy it.

With NEPAD, we now have an instrument, a strategy and a cause. It is up to the African countries to provide it with substance, to promote democracy and fulfil the explicit proposal to work together. That is why we welcome the creation of the African Union. It is necessary for the members of this Assembly and the United Nations to establish the necessary complementary resources and investments in order to provide access to markets, technology and knowledge. The difference between success and failure for NEPAD lies precisely in the quality, scope and continuity of the strategic association that we are able to establish for it. By this, I mean a strategic association between all the bodies of this Assembly and between the United Nations agencies; a strategic association with the Bretton Woods institutions and a strategic association with Governments, companies, universities, civil society and the mass media.

In this framework for action, the Economic and Social Council Special Ad Hoc Advisory Committee on African Countries emerging from conflict situations, as well as the Special Working Group on the Prevention and Solution of Conflicts in Africa, created by the Security Council, are designing support measures for Africa, the implementation of which will be undertaken with the coordinated participation of all United Nations bodies. Mexico joins in this cause. Because of their origin, magnitude and consequences, the problems of Africa are our problems, faced by all of us. The international community is undoubtedly indebted to Africa.

The success of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) will be essential for the building of a new international architecture. Africa's development and inclusion, based on a new foundation for the process of globalization, depend to a great extent on humanity being capable of facing the greatest challenges and making use of the opportunities of our times.

Africa is where we should test our will to prevent wars and to achieve just and lasting peace arrangements in which the deep-rooted causes of conflict can be addressed. It is on this continent where we should demonstrate our collective will to effectively combat HIV/AIDS, reintegrate refugees and displaced

persons into a dignified and productive life, insure that human rights be respected, protect the environment, make sustainable use of natural resources, lower infant mortality, respect the rights of minorities and fully involve women in collective efforts to achieve prosperity and development.

The International Conference Financing for Development at Monterrey, the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, the FAO conference on food in Rome, and the meeting of the Group of Eight Industrialized Countries (G-8) in Canada are forums that gave rise to commitments made earlier this year, to insure that the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) would become a reality in Africa.

The President: In accordance with the decision taken earlier this morning at the 10th plenary meeting I now call on the President of the Economic and Social Council, His Excellency Mr. Ivan Šimonović.

Mr. Šimonović (President of the Economic and Social Council): I am honoured to participate, on behalf of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) at the plenary debate on NEPAD. The Council welcomes the opportunity to make a contribution to the debate on Africa, whose sustainable development remains a high priority for its members.

I am pleased to say that the Economic and Social Council was among the first, if not the first, to welcome both the launching of the African Union and this very important Africa-designed and Africa-owned initiative at its high-level segment, which was held a few days after the OAU Summit in Lusaka last year.

Indeed, last year the Council devoted its high-level segment to the theme "The role of the United Nations in support of African countries to achieve sustainable development".

A number of important messages emerged from that meeting which are important both for the final review and appraisal of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990's (UN-NADAF) and for the plenary debate on NEPAD. There was a strong consensus that there should be no new initiatives for Africa, but that the United Nations system should provide an effective, coordinated response to the initiative, utilizing it as the framework for support of the region.

There was also general agreement on the critical importance of peace, democracy and good governance as the foundation for sustainable development in Africa and the need for a comprehensive, integrated approach to peace and development at national and subregional levels.

Nowhere does Africa need the assistance of the international community more than in the area of conflict prevention and peace-building. I am pleased to say that on 15 July 2002 the Council established an ad hoc advisory group on African countries emerging from conflict. The group will be small and flexible and will provide advice to the Council on how to ensure that the assistance of the international community in support of the country concerned is adequate, coherent, well coordinated and effective. The Council will use its coordinating function to promote, in a practical way, system-wide efforts to address the economic, social and humanitarian dimensions of post-conflict peace-building as well as to mobilize needed attention and resources for individual countries.

As I announced at the conclusion of this year's substantive session, Guinea-Bissau requested the creation of an ad hoc advisory group, which the Council will be considering shortly.

Let me use this opportunity to draw attention to some disturbing trends. There is growing evidence that most African countries, especially the least developed, will not be able to achieve several of the Millennium Development Goals by 2015, largely because of the lack of adequate financial resources, weak institutional capacities to implement the action plans required to meet the goals, the devastating consequences of HIV/AIDS, and, in some countries, conflict.

In its follow-up to the International Conference on Financing for Development at Monterrey, the Council, which has been given the important responsibility for follow-up, will work with the Bretton Woods institutions to ensure that the issues of debt, market access, official development assistance and foreign direct investment, which are of such critical importance for Africa's economic recovery, are meaningfully addressed.

I am glad to inform you that Africa featured strongly in this year's high-level segment of ECOSOC, which had as its theme, the contribution of human resources development, in particular health and education, to the process of development. Two high-

level panels were held on the status of Africa with relation to the human resources aspects of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in general, and the health-related MDGs in particular. Strong concern was expressed that, following current trends, the majority of African countries will not achieve these goals. In its ministerial communiqué, the Council offered strong support for NEPAD to achieve, inter alia, its human resources development objectives.

Let me conclude. I assure you that the Council stands by its commitment made at its high-level segment of 2001 that it will do whatever is required to ensure the sustainable development of Africa. On its behalf, I urge Africa's partners to renew the commitment we made at last year's high-level segment to Africa's sustainable development.

I look forward to working with the African Union, its subregional organizations and its members in this respect.

The President: In accordance with General Assembly resolution 2011 (XX) of 11 October 1965 and Assembly decision 56/475 of 15 August 2002, I now call on the Interim Chairman of the Commission of the African Union and former President of the General Assembly, His Excellency Mr. Amara Essy.

Mr. Essy (African Union) (*spoke in French*): From 27 May to 1 June 1986 the General Assembly devoted a special session to Africa and adopted a decision on the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990 (UNPAAERD). Sixteen years later, the Assembly is also devoting a special session to Africa and more particularly to NEPAD. Therefore, in my capacity as Interim President of the African Union, I would like to thank the members of the General Assembly and the Secretary-General for this show of concern towards Africa.

UNPAAERD offered some hope for Africa. But the commitments were not kept, the programme failed and a new programme, the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (UN-NADAF) was adopted by the General Assembly. The report of the Panel says that a lack of commitment on the part of the main agents of development was one of the reasons for the non-implementation of the New Agenda.

Since that time, what have we seen? Of the 49 least developed countries, 35 are in Africa. There are 5 million refugees and 15 million displaced persons, and half of its people live on less than one dollar a day. Secretary-General Kofi Annan has reported that since 1996 half of all the world's deaths occur in Africa. What can we do today?

Africa knows poverty. It is a rich continent with poor people. I think it is these past failures that led heads of State to design the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), which is a programme adopted by the African Union — initially in Lusaka, when it was known as the Organization of African Unity.

NEPAD is the result of all that we have learned from all the failures. I will not discuss it here in any great detail. As the saying goes, "When the head is available, you do not wear a hat on your knees." President Obasanjo, President Wade and President Mubarak, among others, have all explained the key features of NEPAD. I think everybody understands it. It was explained in Paris, in Dakar and in Kananaskis. We have explained it everywhere; it was just the subject of a meeting in the Trusteeship Council Chamber.

I think that today NEPAD is the hope of the African Union. Without its success, there will be no success for the African Union. The two things are intimately linked. We are aware that Africa has learned all the lessons from past failures. The new Partnership is based on a new concept. Africa is not begging anymore. Africa has examined the situation. And Africa knows what it has to do. After 40 years of independence we have grown to adulthood. I think we all know that "God helps those who help themselves." Africa wants to help itself, and Africa is waiting for the international assistance it needs to ensure its own development.

As everyone knows, Africa is a very rich continent. We know that in this globalized world there cannot be oases of prosperity in a desert of poverty. The success of NEPAD will not only be a success for Africa, but a success for the entire international community. Africa needs to be built. And we are sure that the success of Africa today is a success that can be compared with that of Europe. Europe experienced the Hundred-Year Wars and the Thirty-Year War. The Marshall plan enabled Europe to develop. I am certain today that the African Union will be able to play its

role today. Our hope is that the promises made in forums worldwide will be kept, and that tomorrow we will have an African Union which is well-established and capable of making its contribution to world peace. That is our hope; I thank all participants for their kind words about the African Union.

The President: In accordance with General Assembly resolution 3208 (XXIX) of 11 October 1974, I now call on His Excellency Mr. John Richardson, chairman of the observer delegation of the European Community.

Mr. Richardson (European Community): As already stated by Denmark on behalf of the European Union (EU), from the very beginning the European Union has expressed its full support for the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) which we see as a truly African platform not just for economic and social progress, but also for political empowerment. The European Commission endorses and supports the political values that are at the heart of NEPAD, which in the EU's view correspond to indispensable components of an effective development policy: good governance, democracy, respect for human rights and the rule of law. It is our strong belief that these elements are indispensable preconditions for the sustainable development of the continent and for the creation of an environment more conducive to peace and stability.

We believe also that the formation of the African Union and the implementation of NEPAD can be mutually reinforcing in propelling the continent forward. The decision taken in Durban in July to set up a Peace and Security Council and an African standby force is evidence of the level of ambitions existing in Africa in this regard.

NEPAD and the African Union have one important characteristic in common: they aim at creating a pan-African level of governance. By its very nature, the European Commission understands and endorses the common vision and values that will guide this new pan-African level of governance, for those values are the same as those that guided and inspired the founding fathers of the European Union in shaping the European integration process, considered the most successful example of an ever closer union among sovereign States.

The European Commission very much appreciates the new dimension of African ownership and leadership expressed through the African Union and NEPAD, and the evident African determination to build a more coherent framework for tackling key challenges such as peace, stability and sustainable development.

The new pan-African level of governance holds great development potential. Engaging civil society and the private sector in a participatory process will be crucial in this new dynamic. The strengthened economic and political environment and the increased integration of the African economies can act, we believe, as a catalyst for better and accelerated mobilization of all development resources, inside and outside, and for increased synergy between different national programmes of neighbouring countries.

The European Union's cooperation with Africa takes place through the contractual instruments of the Barcelona Mediterranean-European Development Agreement, the Cotonou Partnership Agreement and The EU-South Africa Trade, Development and Cooperation Agreement, which we have negotiated with African countries. The Commission is ready to support NEPAD itself as a process, and we are prepared to assess and reassess our own programmes in Africa in the light of NEPAD, and to step up our support for regional and continental integration.

NEPAD and the African Union are likely to play an important part in the next stage of the dialogue between the EU and Africa. The second Europe-Africa ministerial conference, to be held in Ouagadougou in November 2002, and the next EU-Africa summit, to be held in Lisbon in April 2003, represent occasions to give new political momentum to the Europe-Africa dialogue, which we began in Cairo two years ago. NEPAD is an important new opportunity in the context of the EU-Africa partnership. We in the EU intend to seize it with our African partners.

The President: In accordance with General Assembly resolution 33/18 of 10 November 1978 and decision 53/453 of 18 December 1998, I now call on the Permanent Observer for the International Organization of La Francophonie, Mr. Ridha Bouabid.

Mr. Bouabid (International Organization of La Francophonie) (*spoke in French*): The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) is the culmination of a series of African development initiatives, including the Lagos Plan of Action and the African alternative framework for structural adjustment. It also

aims to be a break and a new start, a break for the sake of a new approach and a new start for the sustainable rebirth of Africa. In Lusaka, in July 2001, when this new African initiative was approved by heads of State or Government of Africa, we in the Francophone community had the feeling that this was a great moment in the history of the African continent, a moment without precedent, a moment highly symbolic of the new face of Africa, of the hopes it nourishes for itself and of the ambition it is cultivating for its peoples.

Now we have before us a programme of action based on a strategic new vision. It is a programme conceived, designed, developed and managed by Africa itself, taking into account all the realities of the continent. In it, African leaders recognize their primary responsibility on the issue and formally commit themselves to taking whatever action is required to put Africa on the path of growth and development and to integrate Africa into the world economy.

The international community must assist that effort with equal commitment, in particular regarding the problems over which Africa has little control. I am thinking especially of the problems of financing, debt and market access.

By affirming the interdependence of peace, democracy and development and by establishing stability, good governance and respect for the rule of law as the prior conditions for development, the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) inspires our respect and deserves our support.

In this context, we welcome the establishment of the peer review mechanism intended to ensure that the policies and practices of the States parties are consistent with the values enshrined in the Declaration on democracy, political, economic and corporate governance.

The International Organization of la Francophonie, whose membership includes 29 African countries, welcomed this initiative from the outset and decided to extend to it its support. We made proposals to that end at the Summit of African Heads of State on the financing of NEPAD, held in Dakar last April. Some of our proposals are the result of observed convergences between the priorities chosen by NEPAD and the priority areas of action of la Francophonie. They mainly fall into the following areas.

With respect to peace, sec
governance, we offer NEPAD ou
programmes, in particular, those i
Bamako Declaration, adopted by
countries in November 2000, with sp
the strengthening of institutional ca
advantage of professional networ
instruments. We and our NEPAD part
process of reflection in the course
meetings, one held in Dakar last Ap
Africa Summit and the other, more re
19 and 20 June, 2002, in order to ref
and to define the specific m
Francophonie's activities with
fundamental aspect of NEPAD.

With respect to the acqu
information and communication
addition to the programmes currently
by the Francophone Institute for New
Training Technologies, which gre
African member countries and whic
NEPAD objectives, a ministerial c
Francophonie on the information soci
2003 in preparation for the World
Information Society to be held in Ge
in Tunis in 2005. The work of that co
la Francophonie's activities in that fi
that is even more supportive of NEPA

The issues of energy and the e
been amply covered by the work w
preparation for the recent Johannesbu
on Sustainable Development. Our c
for action with respect to those issues,
our relevant programming over the n
in large part inspired by the concer
formulated in NEPAD.

Lastly, education and culture
which la Francophonie posses
experience. Its programmes for Africa
carried out in close cooperation with
Education, particularly those of Af
say, they are in line with the pric
NEPAD.

To conclude, I would add that th
francophone countries with Afric
prominent place on the agenda of the
of State and Government of Countrie
a Common Language, to be held in B

a few weeks. NEPAD will, indeed, be at the centre of the discussions on economic issues at the Summit.

The President: We have heard the last speaker in the debate on NEPAD.

I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Thabo Mbeki, President of the Republic of South Africa, to present orally a summary of the discussions in the informal panel and also to introduce draft resolution A/57/L.2/Rev.1.

President Mbeki (South Africa): I am pleased to present this brief report on the informal panel discussion on the theme "the international community's partnership with the New Partnership for Africa's Development" (NEPAD), which was held this afternoon in parallel with the high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly on the New Partnership for Africa's Development.

Let me thank the many participants, including heads of State and Government, ministers, heads of delegations and ambassadors, as well as heads and representatives of the agencies and organizations of the United Nations system and of the Bretton Woods institutions. In particular, I would like to express my appreciation to my fellow panellists, President Obasanjo of Nigeria, President Abdelaziz Bouteflika of Algeria, President Abdoulaye Wade of Senegal, and Mr. Ahmed Maher El Sayed, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Egypt, who represented His Excellency President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt. The panel was ably moderated by Mr. Mark Malloch Brown, chairman of the United Nations Development Group.

The interactive discussion following the presentations by the panellists was wide-ranging and showed the considerable and continuing international commitment to NEPAD. Representatives of Member States reaffirmed the support of their Governments for the implementation of NEPAD by committing resources and taking various other actions, including debt reduction, increasing official development assistance and providing market access for African goods and services. However, they stressed the need for good governance, accountability, transparency and the rule of law in African countries. They underlined that good governance was critical to attracting investment. They also stressed the need to move ahead with the implementation of NEPAD, and they called for broader international partnership in support of that effort. In that regard, the Group of Eight Africa Action Plan was cited as an example of the response of the international community for the implementation of NEPAD.

The need to engage with international financial institutions and the importance of African ownership in the successful implementation of NEPAD were also stressed. In addition, the need to deepen African ownership through the involvement of civil society, parliamentarians, academia and the private sector was emphasized. It was recognized that African civil society lacked the capacity, in many instances, to actively engage itself in the debate on the NEPAD process. In that regard, the international community was called upon to help in building capacity inside the civil society. It was also noted that African Governments themselves need further reinforcements with regard to building up capacity in various areas.

The agencies and organizations of the United Nations system expressed strong support for NEPAD. They underlined the fact that they have organized their activities in Africa to respond directly to the priorities of NEPAD. They highlighted the wide range of activities that their agencies had undertaken in support of NEPAD, and they pledged to use existing United Nations coordinating mechanisms, especially at the country level, to support that effort. To enhance the impact of the United Nations agencies in the implementation of NEPAD, they agreed that there should be greater collaboration among themselves, but also that much larger resources are required to make sure that Africa meets its challenges.

That is a brief summary of the report of this afternoon's very successful interaction.

It remains for me to introduce document A/57/L.2/Rev.1, the draft United Nations declaration on the New Partnership for Africa's Development, which is sponsored by more than 145 countries. It broadly embodies the spirit of support for NEPAD, as reflected in the debate at the plenary meeting today. Therefore, I commend the draft declaration for consideration and adoption by the General Assembly.

Finally, I should like to express our deep appreciation for the decision of the General Assembly to hold today's high-level plenary meeting on NEPAD, and also to thank the President of the Assembly, the Member States and the Secretary-General for having participated in this important meeting.

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/57/L.2/Rev.1, entitled "United Nations Declaration on the New Partnership for Africa's Development".

Before proceeding to take action on the draft resolution, I should like to announce that since the publication of the draft resolution, the following countries have become co-sponsors of A/57/L.2/Rev.1: Albania, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burundi, Canada, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Congo, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Eritrea, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Germany, Greece, Guyana, Hungary, Iceland, Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Luxembourg, Malawi, Malaysia, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovenia, Somalia, Spain, Sudan, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Tonga, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Uruguay, Viet Nam, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/57/L.2/Rev.1?

Draft resolution A/57/L.2/Rev.1 was adopted (resolution 57/2).

The President: The high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly to consider how to support the New Partnership for Africa's Development is now concluded.

The meeting rose at 7.30 p.m.